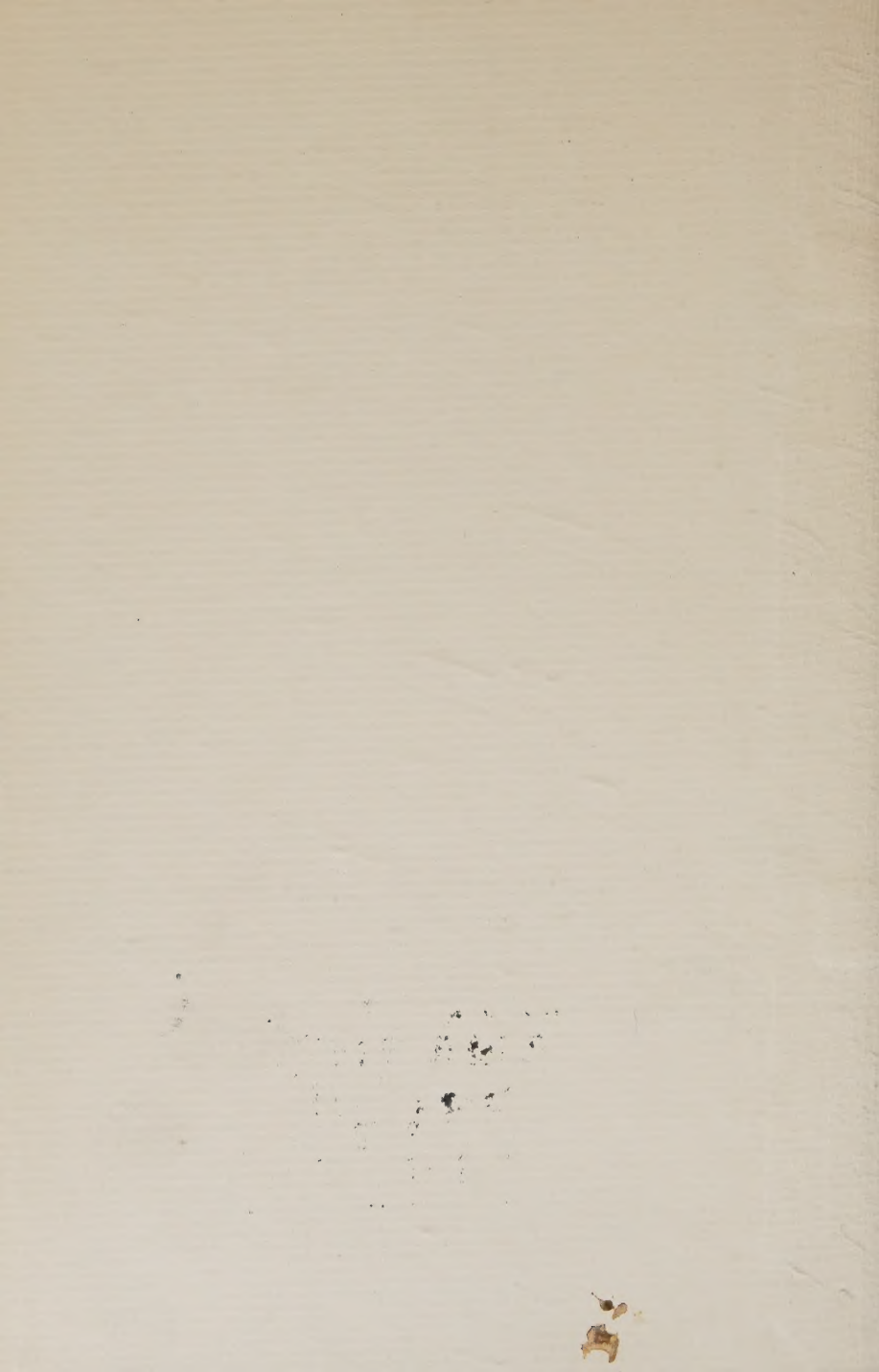


THE MAN
OF THE MASK

MONSIGNOR A. S. BARNES



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The man of the mask : a study in the
by-ways of history

THE MAN OF THE MASK

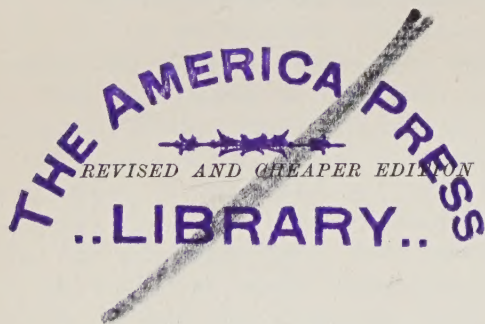
THE MAN OF THE MASK

A STUDY IN THE BY-WAYS OF HISTORY

BY

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TO
RAPHAEL
CARDINAL MERRY DEL VAL

PREFACE

A FEW words of introduction are needed to explain the changes which have been made in this book since the publication of the first edition. Originally the author assumed the genuineness of the letters of King Charles II. to the General of the Jesuits, as all historians, following in this the lead of the late Lord Acton, have hitherto done. He has, however, since then been able to prove, in conjunction with Mr. Andrew Lang, that these letters are all forgeries, and consequently, that James de la Cloche was no son of Charles II., but an impostor. This has necessitated re-writing the portions of the book which refer to him. The main thesis of the book, however—the identification of the ‘Man in the Iron Mask’ with the Abbé Pregnani, the mysterious priest-astrologer who was the envoy of Louis XIV. to Charles II.—remains unaffected ; nor has any fresh evidence been adduced, during the two years which have passed since the book was published, which renders this solution less probable. Indeed the alterations which have now been made make the story more probable instead of less so, and it is, therefore, put forward once again, as a serious attempt to afford a solution for a mystery all other solutions of which have already hopelessly broken down.



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BOOK I

THE 'MAN IN THE IRON MASK'

CHAPTER

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CHAPTER I

THE BEGINNINGS OF THE MYTH

To write a new book on so well-worn a subject as that of 'The Man in the Iron Mask' is an undertaking which requires a certain amount of courage. For the greater part of two hundred years the problem has been discussed almost *ad nauseam*; one hypothesis after another has been brought forward with the utmost confidence as giving the final solution, only to be shown to be just as impossible as all those that have gone before. It is true, no doubt, that during the last few years the flow of books and articles dealing with the subject has been less constant than of old. The matter to some extent has lost its interest, because, since the connection with the royal house of Bourbon has been given up, men have found themselves unable to accept the alternative solution, which in no way really satisfies the conditions of the problem, that the Mask covered the features of Mattioli, the Minister of the Duke of Mantua. Yet, if they rejected that, no other candidate was possible except one whose life seemed to offer no possibility of interest or romance—a poor valet imprisoned apparently because of his knowledge of some great political secret, whose real name and antecedents it seemed impossible to trace.

Yet all the time the real solution lay open, covered only by a veil that could easily be lifted, were it not

that nobody thought of lifting it. The original sin which has infected almost all those who have investigated this question has been, as M. Lair has said, the love of the wonderful: the assumption that a prisoner so closely guarded must be a personage of importance; and, consequently, the neglect of evidence that lay close under the eyes of all. The very first mention of this celebrated prisoner that appeared in print contained already the clue which leads direct to the recovery of his story. The later writings of the eighteenth century are more calculated to mislead than to help us in our inquiry.

In 1715 one Constantine de Renneville, who had been a prisoner in the Bastille for eleven years, but had at that time recovered his liberty, published a book in which he violently attacked his recent gaolers and the way in which the prison was conducted. In this book he tells a story of a certain fellow-prisoner whom he had seen once by accident, but whose name he had never been able to ascertain. He had questioned his turnkey Ru upon the subject, and had learnt from him that this man had been a prisoner for one-and-thirty years. He had been brought to the Bastille, he was told, by the Governor, M. de Saint-Mars, from the Iles Sainte-Marguerite, where he had been condemned to lifelong captivity for having, when a boy of twelve or thirteen years of age, composed certain objectionable verses against the Jesuits.

The latter part of this story we may dismiss at once. It is of a piece with sundry other 'fairy tales' composed by Saint-Mars and his underlings to throw too inquisitive inquirers off the track. But the earlier piece of information seems likely to be true, at least approximately. Ru would know nothing definite about

the crimes of any of the prisoners committed to his charge, but he would be a first-class witness on the length of time that they had spent in prison, and most especially in the case before us. For Ru himself had come to the Bastille in company with Saint-Mars from the Iles Sainte-Marguerite, and therefore knew as much as any man could know of the history of the mysterious prisoner.

Renneville himself thought that this conversation had taken place in 1705 or at the end of 1704, and that the prisoner had left the Bastille about three months afterwards. If we count back thirty-one years from that date it will bring us to 1674, in which year a very mysterious and important prisoner was brought to Saint-Mars at Pignerol. But this prisoner was set at liberty the next year, and cannot be the Man in the Mask. Moreover, we know that the masked prisoner died in 1704, so Renneville must have been mistaken in the date of the conversation. Assuming that it took place three months before the death of the prisoner, it gives us 1671-72, as the date of his entry into Pignerol. That date is too early for Mattioli, who only came there in 1679, and can only apply to the man known at Pignerol as 'Eustache Dager,' a prisoner sent there in August 1669 under very mysterious circumstances. He had been arrested at Dunkirk, and had been brought thence by the town-major M. de Vauroy, across the whole length and breadth of France, to be kept in the utmost secrecy at Pignerol—not apparently for the commission of any crime—but lest he should tell to any living soul on what business it was that 'he had been employed' before he came to that place. Now it can hardly have been at Dunkirk itself that any great political secret can have been worked out. But

Dunkirk suggests England; it was a port between which and Dover communications from England to France were constantly passing. It is to England, therefore, rather than to the town of Dunkirk, that we must look if we want to find out Dauger's secret. What secret was there between England and France just at this period of 1669? Why, 'the great secret,' so-called by Charles himself in his letter to Madame, dated June 6, 1669; 'the greatest secret of his life,' as he called it to Colbert de Croissy, the French Ambassador, in October; 'the most important affair that is now existing in all the world,' as that same ambassador described it on November 14 to Lionne, the French secretary for Foreign Affairs. It was a secret the premature disclosure of which might well have cost Charles his throne and Louis his ally—a secret which therefore it was necessary should be kept at all hazards, and even at the cost of individual suffering. That doubtless was the secret that 'Eustache Dauger' knew, and the knowledge of which led to his lifelong imprisonment. How it was that he came to know it, and why his imprisonment had the added feature of the 'Iron Mask,' it will be the purpose of this volume to reveal. To do so at present would be premature, until we have first traced in detail the history of the Masked Man, and, in the second place, told the story of 'the great secret' which underlay and influenced so much of the political action of the earlier part of the reign of Charles II.

It was the afternoon of September 18, 1698, some little time before sunset, when there arrived at the great gate of the Bastille a party of armed horsemen. They were in attendance on M. de Saint-Mars, the

newly appointed governor of the Château, who was now come from his former post in the Iles Sainte-Marguerite, opposite Cannes, to take up the duties of his new post.

He had brought with him from Provence a prisoner, who had been guarded with extraordinary vigilance all the way, and who wore over his face, so that no man might see his features, a black mask. The name of this mysterious prisoner was known to no one of those who brought him, unless indeed to Saint-Mars himself. He had been, so men said who were in a position to know, under the special charge of the Governor for many long years, having been committed to his care so far back as the time when he was Governor of Pignerol, near Turin, many years before he got the command of the Iles Sainte-Marguerite.

No one knew what his crime had been or whether he had ever committed any crime at all. Only the extraordinary precautions of which he was the centre, and which had continued for so many years, had led men at the Iles, as also long before at Pignerol itself, to form wild surmises as to his identity and as to the reason of his long incarceration. Down there men had said he was no other than the Duc de Beaufort, who had disappeared in 1669 after a sea fight in Candia, when his body had never been found. Others, again, had connected him with England, and had said he was a son of Cromwell, the late Lord Protector, and that he was kept in confinement lest he should give trouble by pretending to the throne of Charles II.

But by this time wiser men had come to see that both these stories were impossible. M. de Beaufort would have been in 1698 no less than eighty-three years of age, whereas this was a man comparatively young,

still tall and upright. Nor was there any son of Oliver Cromwell the events of whose life were not well known. These stories, then, were evidently false, and very possibly had been set in circulation by Saint-Mars himself to draw off suspicion from the real state of the case. None the less, men said, even if he is not some great one, and it is hard to suggest any great name which might be his, he must at the least be of great political importance. Never before in the history of the State prisons of France had anyone been guarded with such infinite precaution and such evident fear of his story becoming known, as was the case with this man.

The party was received by Du Jonca, the 'Lieutenant of the King,' who was the acting Commandant of the Château until the new Governor arrived. He took over the prisoner from Saint-Mars, placed him temporarily in a room near the entrance, and, when night had come, conducted him to the room which had already been furnished for him on the third floor of the Tower Bertaudière, where he shut him in alone. From that time onwards the charge of the prisoner was committed to De Rosarges, the new 'major' of the Bastille, who had come with Saint-Mars from Sainte-Marguerite. He alone was allowed to enter his cell or to hold communication with him in any way. Other prisoners of less importance were served by Ru or one of the other turnkeys, but this one was waited on by the 'major' of the Bastille, and by no one of a more menial rank.

Five years passed away and a little group stood by an open grave in the churchyard of St. Paul, the parish church of the Bastille. It was the funeral, quiet and undistinguished, of one of the secret

prisoners who had died. Rosarges was there, and Reilh the surgeon of the prison, a few men to carry the corpse, and that was all. It was four o'clock in the afternoon of Tuesday, November 20, 1703. They were there to bury the masked prisoner, the man of the 'troisième Bertaudière,' whose name no man had ever known—the man who had been brought to the Bastille so mysteriously by M. de Saint-Mars—who had passed away somewhat suddenly, almost without any previous illness, about ten o'clock the evening before. They buried him under the name of Marchioly, giving him no doubt a false name, as the law explicitly ordered to be done in such cases, and giving him a false age—about forty-five.

The age was no doubt suggested by the 'fairy tale' already quoted, which seems to have been specially manufactured for telling to inquisitive persons at the Bastille, about the Jesuits and the scholar who wrote verses against them. It may be of value as an additional hint of the time when the prisoner first came into Saint-Mars' care, some three-and-thirty years before his death, since the boy was said in the story to have been but twelve when the verse was written. But there its value ends, for as a matter of fact no boy was ever a prisoner at Pignerol or anywhere else under Saint-Mars' care.

The name given was Marchioly. Was that the mere invention of the moment, or was it too intended to mislead? Was it intended to suggest, in case undesirable inquiries should ever later on be made, that this prisoner, thus stealthily laid to rest, was, indeed, no other than Mattioli, the most famous, if the least mysterious, of all the prisoners whom Saint-Mars had recently had in charge, and whose name

Saint-Mars himself had been in the habit of writing as Marthioly. It would at least be like the ways of the Bastille at this period, and in conformity with the way in which this particular prisoner had always been treated, if this were so.

In any case we may be quite sure of one thing—that his name, whatever it may have been, was not Marchioly or anything the least like it, and that his age was not forty-five or any number of years closely approaching that figure. It was not likely that, after taking such infinite pains to hide his identity for all those years, the authorities were going to give themselves away by putting up a tombstone to his memory on which all who came might read the truth.

It is from the two entries in Du Jonca's 'Journals' from which the above particulars have been given, and which will be found printed on pages 296–8, that every inquiry about the man in the so-called 'Iron Mask' must start. We learn from them that the mask was not of iron at all; not, as fancy has generally depicted it, an additional and horrible torment over and above those which are inseparable from so long a confinement in solitude. It was nothing more than a light mask of black velvet, the wearing of which would give scarcely any inconvenience, and was designed merely to prevent any possibility of the prisoner being recognised if he should chance to be seen at any time outside his cell.

Du Jonca, we learn, had never heard this prisoner called by any name. He knew him simply as *l'ancien prisonnier*, the prisoner of long standing, a name which was appropriate enough if, as seems probable, he had been in captivity for more than thirty years. Saint-Mars writes *mon ancien prisonnier*, and this, it has

been urged by those who think the prisoner to have been Mattioli, might mean 'my prisoner of old time,' the prisoner who was with me long ago and has now come back to me. Such an interpretation, however, would leave no interpretation possible for Du Jonca's use of the phrase. He at least had never had the prisoner in his charge at any previous period, and it will scarcely be contended that the same word *ancien*, employed by both men of the same prisoner, was yet used in two varying senses. It is fairly evident that the phrase *l'ancien prisonnier*, 'the prisoner of long standing,' was the ordinary designation by which the officials of the Bastille were accustomed to speak of a prisoner whose name was unknown to them.

The point is one of some importance, for there was only one among the many prisoners who at one time or another passed through Saint-Mars' hands who could fairly be described in this way. This was the one who for a short time at Pignerol had been known as 'Eustache Dauger,' a prisoner who at this period had been with Saint-Mars for very many years and had accompanied him in all his migrations from Pignerol to Exiles, from Exiles to Sainte-Marguerite, and who was almost certainly the prisoner brought in 1698 from Sainte-Marguerite to the Bastille.

For this last migration it is quite true that there are other candidates, and especially, of course, Mattioli. We shall go into the matter in detail later on, but for the moment it will be well to note this difficulty which is involved in the use of the phrase *l'ancien prisonnier* by Du Jonca as well as by Saint-Mars.

During his lifetime the mysterious prisoner attracted little attention. Mysterious prisoners were, after all, not uncommon at the Bastille, and generally turned

out to be very unimportant persons. Take, for instance, the masked man who arrived at the fortress in March 1695—three years before our prisoner, brought there in a litter by a lieutenant and twenty horsemen, no man knowing his name. The fact was reported in the ‘Gazette d’Amsterdam’ of March 14 of that year. Very probably men wondered about him, and asked what great personage had disappeared. Yet, after all, he was only one Gedeon Philbert, the son of a banker at Lyons who had been getting into trouble.¹ The masked prisoner of 1698 might perhaps be of no greater importance, and so men at the time thought little of him, although at the Bastille itself certain traditions seem to have survived.

After our prisoner’s death, however, and when sufficient years had passed away to make the mystery get more mysterious, fancy began to weave romances round him. The legend was afloat as early as 1711. ‘There lived for long years in the Bastille,’ writes Mme. Palatine, the sister-in-law of Louis XIV., in that year to the Electress Sophia of Hanover, ‘a man who was constantly masked, and masked he died there. Two musketeers were at his side to shoot him if ever he unmasked. He ate and slept in his mask. There must doubtless have been some strong reason for this, for otherwise he was well treated in every way, well lodged, and had all his needs supplied. He was very devout, received Holy Communion in his mask, and read perpetually.’²

Later on the Princess writes again that she has just learnt that he was an English nobleman mixed up in the plot of the Duke of Berwick against William III.,

¹ See Iung, p. 8, and Burgaud, p. 193.

² Quoted by M. Depping in the *Revue Bleue*, July 18, 1896

and masked so that the Dutch usurper might never know what had happened to him. Here, again, we have to deal with 'fairy tales,' told to the Princess with the direct object of deceiving her. The masked prisoner, as we know from what Ru said to Renneville, had been in captivity for many years before William came to England. Still it is worth noticing that we have the suggestion, constantly recurring in all the earlier notices of the Mask, that the mystery was in some way connected with England and with English politics. The other details, that he was devout and fond of reading, coming as they do without any apparent *arrière pensée* and at a period within eight years of his death, we may take as probably well founded, as also that, at least in the later years of his life, he was well treated and lodged, and had all his wants supplied. Accurate information on these points was still easily obtainable by those in the Princess's position who were interested and made inquiries.

Thirty years went by before myths began definitely to form themselves. In 1747 there was published at Amsterdam a volume entitled 'Mémoires secrets pour servir à l'histoire de Persia,' an anonymous book dealing with sundry secrets and scandals of the Court of Versailles, veiled under a thin disguise of Eastern nomenclature. An imaginary story of the Comte de Vermandois, the natural son of Louis XIV. and De la Vallière, is told under the name of Prince Giafer. He was condemned to death, so the story tells, for having insulted his half-brother, the Dauphin. One of the ministers, in pity for the grief of the father, Cha-Abas (Louis XIV.) contrives that he should be sent to Feldvan (Flanders) and reported as having died of plague. He was, however, in reality taken by night

and incarcerated in the island of Ormus (Sainte-Marguerite), where he remained until the Governor of Ormus, appointed by Cha-Abas to be Governor of Ispahan, brought with him his prisoner, and, lest he should be recognised, made him continually wear a mask.

Here begins the myth which connects the prisoner with the royal house of Bourbon. The actual facts and dates had by this time faded out of memory, and men did not see at once that a prisoner who died in 1703, after more than thirty years of captivity, could not be the Comte de Vermandois, who in that year would have been but thirty-five years of age. Besides, the death and burial of Vermandois in 1683 was generally known and is well attested.

The idea, however, that the prisoner had been connected with the royal house had sunk deep into the public imagination, and was cleverly made use of by no less a man than Voltaire to weaken the credit of royalty in France. The Comte de Vermandois was but an illegitimate son of a reigning king, and his existence had no influence on the true succession to the crown. Voltaire would make of the prisoner a twin, or even an elder brother of the king himself—the true heir to the crown of France, hidden away from his birth and made to wear the mask for fear that his fatal likeness to the reigning monarch should cause the secret to be known.

It was Voltaire also who invented ‘the iron mask,’ which has done so much to impress the popular imagination. It was as he described it, and as Dumas, in the ‘*Vicomte de Bragelonne*,’ has repeated his description, an iron helmet covering the entire head, but with a chin piece which was movable, and allowed the

unfortunate wearer to eat his food. The real mask was a light one covering only the upper part of the face and allowing the mouth and chin to be freely seen. So at least it was described by the peasants who saw it when the prisoner was on his way from Sainte-Marguerite to the Bastille.¹ So, again, it was Voltaire also who was responsible for the other details of the captivity which appealed so much to people's minds, but had no real foundation. He told of a passion for lace and the finest linen, always gratified to the full ; of long hours whiled away by playing upon a lute ; of a message saying who the prisoner really was, scratched with a knife upon a silver dish, and thrown upon the rocks from a prison window ; of the governor, who addressed his captive always as ' Mon-seigneur,' and served him at table upon his bended knee ; of Louvois, the all-powerful Minister who journeyed down to Sainte-Marguerite to see the prisoner, and remained standing and bareheaded before him until he was allowed to take a seat, and other tales of that kind, all calculated to appeal to the imagination and impress the mind with the idea of the greatness of this unknown prisoner, and all, although quite untrue in the form in which he gave them, evidently founded upon incidents which actually happened and are otherwise on record. Louvois, for instance, though he never came to Sainte-Marguerite, did actually visit Pignerol after the prisoner had come there. Saint-Mars did actually, for the greater security of the secret, himself serve the prisoner in the early days of his captivity. And, although the prisoner himself never seems from first to last to have made the slightest effort to break through the conditions of his captivity

¹ *Année littéraire*, 1768.

or to hold any kind of communication with the world outside, it is on record that, while he was at Sainte-Marguerite, a Protestant minister, shut up in the same prison for his religion after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, did write upon the pewter vessels provided for him, in order to let the world know how he was incarcerated for the purity of his faith. It is clear that very real interest must have been created at the time by the unusual conditions of this imprisonment for these stories to have gathered round them, half a century later, when Voltaire came to collect them, so much of the wonderful and picturesque.

This same main idea that the prisoner was in reality the true heir of the Bourbons, and that this was the reason of the extraordinary precaution with which he was guarded, was put forth in many forms during the latter half of the eighteenth century. Those who are curious in such matters may easily follow the successive developments in the pages of M. Marius Topin,¹ or of several other of the books which deal with the subject. For most people they are now of but slight interest, since they have long since been shown to be destitute of all real foundation. The interest, however, which they excited at the time, when men believed them to be true and the legitimacy of the reigning house was deeply involved, was naturally intense. Only from king to king, so men said, was the true story handed down. From the king alone, when the last of the original Ministers was dead, could any authentic information be obtained. But royalty, if it knew, was tiresomely discreet. The Regent, in a drunken debauch, was said to have admitted that 'the Mask' was a son of Anne of Austria, the mother of the

¹ *L'homme au Masque de Fer*, Paris, 1870.

Grand Monarque. Louis XV., pressed by La Pompadour, would say nothing at all except that he was the Minister of an Italian Prince, but to his own daughter he said on one occasion: 'Let them talk, no one has ever yet said the truth about the Iron Mask. What you shall know that others don't know is just this—that at least his imprisonment did no injury to anyone except himself.'¹ Louis XVI., if he ever knew anything definite upon the matter, kept his own counsel and said nothing even upon the scaffold. But by that time the clue to the mystery was probably utterly lost, and not even the king himself knew the answer to the question so many men were asking. The last authentic voice was that of M. de Chamillart, who must have known something of the truth, since he was the Minister who succeeded Barbezieux. When he was pressed to say what he knew before he died, he replied that it was a secret of State which he must not reveal, but that the Mask had been a man who knew all the secrets of M. Fouquet.²

The last and wildest form of the myth was not the least interesting. In 1801, when the great Napoleon was dominating France, there was circulated a story which gave a new development to the old legend. The man in the mask, according to this new version, was no other than the true Louis XIV. languishing in captivity, while a bastard usurper, the son of Anne of Austria and of Mazarin, sat in his place upon the throne of France. He married in his prison at Sainte-Marguerite, and the child, carried away across the sea to Corsica, the island actually visible on a clear day from the prison of the father, was brought up there in

¹ Lacroix, *Histoire de l'homme au Masque de Fer*, p. 89.

² Quoted by Voltaire in his answer to La Beaumelle.

secrecy. They gave him the name of Buona-Parte to indicate that he came of a goodly stock, and there he grew up, married, and became the grandfather of the great Napoleon. It was the First Consul, therefore, not the king who had died upon the scaffold in 1793, or the Dauphin of whom no man knew clearly whether or no he were yet alive, who gathered up into himself the claims of the Bourbon dynasty, and was soon, perhaps, to take his place on the throne of France, the true and undoubted heir of the ancient line, as being the descendant of 'the Man in the Iron Mask.'

With the nineteenth century came the opportunity of searching the records, which till then had been jealously guarded. Napoleon himself, when he had become Emperor, caused the most careful search to be made in all the foreign correspondence of the period,¹ in the hope of setting the question at rest by the discovery of the prisoner's real identity. Nothing whatever could be discovered, and the great man had to own himself baffled, so carefully had all the traces of the mystery been covered over. Enough, however, could still be found to make it abundantly clear that there was no truth in the stories of a royal prisoner, nor even any reason to suppose that the masked man had ever been a personage of great importance. The question had by no means lost its interest, and all through the century more and more documents were gradually brought to light. The surmises built upon the indications which these documents provided will be the subject of our next Chapter. Meanwhile, we will bring this Chapter to an end by setting down for future use the few credible details which the tradition of the eighteenth century has handed down.

¹ Lacroix, *Histoire, &c.*, p. 141.

The earliest of all, the story told by Renneville, which has been already alluded to, is probably not very trustworthy. Renneville was a great romancer, and it is quite likely that he invented the incident. Still, it is certainly evidence that the masked prisoner did excite a certain curiosity among his fellow prisoners at the Bastille, little as they were allowed to know about him. It is trustworthy probably on the point of the long captivity—but hardly on the details of the personal appearance of the prisoner. Renneville says that he could not see his face, for the man was made to turn away and look towards the wall, but his recollections were of a man tall and straight, with a quantity of thick black hair, among which not a single white one had as yet made its appearance.

In 1767 a note was drawn up for the use of Voltaire by De Formanoir, great-nephew of the De Formanoir (afterwards Blainvilliers), who had been Saint-Mars' lieutenant at Sainte-Marguerite and at the Bastille. He said that his uncle had told him how, in order to get a view of the masked man, he had once at Sainte-Marguerite taken the place of the sentinel and watched outside his prison. He had seen him at night through the window, tall and well made, a vigorous man in spite of his grey hairs. At the Isles he had passed under the name of 'Latour,' and wore his mask whenever strangers could see him. His dress was brown, his linen very fine. He had books, and every indulgence which was not inconsistent with his imprisonment. The governor and the officers remained standing and uncovered before him, until he gave them permission to be seated and to put on their hats.

It is very difficult to know how much to believe of this story. It strikes one as very much less worthy

of credit than the latter part of the same document, which seems authentic enough and will be quoted later on. Still, the authority quoted is beyond criticism. No man knew more about the masked prisoner than did the elder De Formanoir, who had him in his direct charge for so many years. The incident at Sainte-Marguerite must have taken place before he was made lieutenant in 1693, while he was still a cadet of the Free Company, and testifies to the seclusion and mystery in which the prisoner was kept, so that the curiosity even of his guards was aroused. In later years De Formanoir must have seen him to excess, since he waited on him daily at Sainte-Marguerite, just as Saint-Mars himself had done at Pignerol, and as Rosarges did at the Bastille.

An old doctor, who in his youth had often been called in to help his father-in-law in his attendance upon the prisoners, used to tell how he had often been sent for to treat this mysterious prisoner. He had never seen his face, although he had examined his tongue and the rest of his body. 'He was admirably made, his skin was dark, his voice interesting. He never complained of his lot or gave any indication as to who he was.'¹

Renneville, who occupied a room in the Bertaudière a floor below the masked man, says that among those on the floor above with whom he communicated by knocking, was an Italian abbé who refused to give his name, nor could he ever learn what it was.²

Another prisoner of the Bastille besides Renneville used to tell how he had held communication with him.

¹ Quoted by Voltaire.

² *L'Inquisition Française*, p. 122, ed. 1715.

This was one Dubuisson, who claimed to have been placed immediately above him—on the fourth floor, that is, of the Bertaudière—and to have opened communications by means of the chimney. But he would tell nothing of his name or his adventures, saying that were he to do so it would cost him his life, and that the same would be the case with those to whom he should be known to have revealed his secret.¹

Then, again, there was another doctor, one Nélaton, whose story is told by Saint-Foix. Being chief assistant to a surgeon near the Porte Saint-Antoine, he was sent one day to bleed a prisoner of the Bastille. The Governor took him into the room of the prisoner, whose head was covered with a long towel knotted on the neck. The prisoner complained of great pains in the head; he wore a dressing-gown of black and yellow, ornamented with large flowers of gold, and the surgeon's assistant, though he could not see his face, perceived by his accent that he was an Englishman.

The testimonies of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which connect the story of the mask with Mattioli, the only person known to history whom it was possible to identify with the mask, are somewhat numerous. At Sainte-Marguerite itself an old man called Souchon, whose father had been of the Free Company, used to say that his father had told him that the mysterious prisoner was 'an envoy of the Emperor to the Court of Turin,' who had been seized by French agents and brought to Saint-Mars from Fenestrelle, and that Saint-Mars had obliged him, under pain of death, to write to Turin for his

¹ *Philippiques*, by Lagrange-Chancel.

papers. Souchon added that he died nine years after his arrest.¹

All this is accurately true, except that Souchon was wrong in his identification. Mattioli did die at the Isles fifteen years, not nine, after his arrest; but he was not the masked prisoner, for *he* went on to the Bastille. The nine years were probably obtained by taking 1579, the year of the arrest, from 1688, the year in which Saint-Mars came with the real man from Exiles. Mattioli came six years later. The tradition in that case would be so far right that it would represent the death as taking place directly he got to the Isles.

The most exact of all who have designated Mattioli as the man is, however, Mme. de Campan. She tells us that the young king, Louis XVI., who did *not* know the truth, caused careful search to be made in the State Papers by M. de Maurepas. The result was that he was told that he was a person of a very dangerous character by reason of his intriguing spirit, and a subject of the Duke of Mantua. He was enticed to the frontier, arrested, and kept a prisoner, first at Pignerol and then at the Bastille.²

Here the evidence would be interesting were it in any way traditional. It is, however, only a guess on the part of M. de Maurepas, based on a study of the State Papers and other documents far less complete than that which has since been made. It is therefore of no value, but with it ends our scanty store of evidence from the writings of the eighteenth century, except for a tradition which seems authentic, and which lasted on for many years at the Bastille, that after the

¹ Iung, p. 43.

² *Mémoires de Marie-Antoinette*.

death of the mysterious prisoner the apartment which he had occupied was carefully painted over and white-washed, while every article he had used was scrupulously destroyed lest any clue to his identity should in this way be handed down to a later and inquisitive generation.

CHAPTER II

THE RESEARCHES OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

So soon as the success of the French Revolution threw open the records of the past in France to those who desired to search them, an essay was made by a M. Roux-Fazillac in 1801 to put the matter of the Mask on a more satisfactory basis. He was not, indeed, quite the first to do this, for that honour is due rather to one Père Griffet, a Jesuit, chaplain to the Bastille in 1745, whose official position gave him access to the prison records and who drew from them and gave to the world the two famous extracts from Du Jonca's journal. Père Griffet inclined to believe that the Iron Mask was really the Comte de Vermandois, and his researches did not lead him any nearer to the actual truth. Roux-Fazillac, on the other hand, rejected all idea of a Bourbon prince, whether legitimate or illegitimate, and fixed instead on one who had a real existence, and who had undoubtedly been a prisoner for many years in Saint-Mars' hands, Ercole Mattioli, the Minister of the Duke of Mantua. Here, again, he was not altogether original. The theory that Mattioli was the wearer of the mask had been first propounded by a certain Baron Heiss as far back as 1770, and it had been repeated by several writers after that date. Roux-Fazillac, however, was the first to treat the matter scientifically and on the basis of actual documentary

evidence. He made out a strong case; so strong, indeed, that it has remained the most popular solution ever since, though a good deal of the evidence which he brings forward has been invalidated by later discoveries. It is therefore necessary, before we go on further, to turn aside and examine the evidence and to point out where its cogency fails.

Ercole Antonio Mattioli was born at Bologna on December 1, 1640. He came of a family of lawyers, and had a somewhat distinguished career at the University of Bologna, where he held a readership in civil and canon law. He was married and had two sons, the elder of whom was born in 1663. After a time he left Bologna and established himself at Mantua, where he gained the confidence of Charles III., the then reigning duke, and was made by him his Secretary of State and Senator, a post that carried with it the title of count.

About the year 1676, when Charles III. had passed away, and his son, the young and frivolous Charles IV. was Duke of Mantua, Louis XIV., under the influence of Louvois, the Minister of War, conceived the idea of getting possession of Casale, the chief place of the Marquisate of Montferrat, which was an outlying territory belonging at this time to Mantua. France already possessed Pignerol, which had a somewhat similar situation, and if she were in possession of both places would hold Piedmont and Turin more or less at her mercy, being able easily and at leisure to mass any number of troops that might be required for service beyond the Alps without going outside her own territory.

The Abbé d'Estrades, who was at that time the French Ambassador at Venice, was directed to discover

some means of persuading Charles IV. to sell Casale. He did so through Mattioli, who had great influence with the Duke, and induced him to entertain the bargain. On December 8, 1678, after somewhat protracted negotiations, the deed was signed. Charles IV., in return for ceding Casale to France, was to receive the sum of a hundred thousand crowns. Mattioli himself came to Paris to carry through the negotiation, was received and thanked by Louis in person, and presented with a valuable diamond ring and a large sum of money. Mattioli returned to Mantua to see the matter completed.

The business was by no means concluded with the mere signing of the agreement. The jealousy of Spain and of the Empire had to be guarded against, as also that of the other Italian States, for no one could doubt that it boded little good for the peace of Italy that the King of France should thus be in possession of a strong fortress on the southern side of the Alps. The utmost secrecy was necessary, so that the cession might be carried out without rousing any suspicions, and become known to the world at large only when it was already a *fait accompli*, with a strong body of French troops already ensconced within the citadel.

Louis, on his side, lost no time in making the necessary preparations. Catinat, in person, was charged with carrying out the project. He was ordered to go to Pignerol, pretending to be a prisoner in the charge of Saint-Mars, the Governor of the *donjon*, and to hide his identity by passing under the name of *De Richemont*. Men and ammunition were massed as quickly as possible at Pignerol and on the frontier. The Baron d'Asfeld was sent to Mantua to complete the negotiations with Mattioli on the side of the Duke, and to

obtain his signature to the documents which had already been signed by Louis XIV.

Meanwhile the suspicions of Italy were being aroused. Everyone saw that something was on foot, and though they had no clear knowledge of the fact, the scheme of the cession of Casale was more than suspected. Remonstrances poured in from the Emperor and from the King of Spain begging Charles not to lend himself to the plans of France, but Charles, while he stoutly denied that anything was on foot, was too much in need of French money to be willing to draw back. At last all was finally settled. Mattioli and d'Asfeld were to meet on March 9, 1679, at Nôtre Dame d'Incréa, about ten miles from Casale, for the final exchange of the documents; while the Duke of Mantua was to be, without fail, at Casale by the 15th, there to receive the French troops, due to arrive on 18th, and to put them in final possession of the citadel. In spite of the jealous fears of other States, the secret appeared to have been strictly kept, and the triumph of French diplomacy seemed already certain.

Then, just at the critical moment, the thunderbolt fell from what was thought a clear sky. They heard with amazement at the Court of Versailles that d'Asfeld had been arrested on his way to Nôtre Dame d'Incréa, as he passed through the territories of the Governor of Milan, which city was at that time in Spanish hands. It was from Mattioli that the news was first received, and suspicions were at once aroused that he had been playing a double game. Before long these suspicions became a certainty. Mattioli had simultaneously given information of the whole affair to all the Courts involved. The cession of Casale was, for the time at any rate, out of the question, and nothing remained

but to take all possible vengeance upon the man who had thus sold and outraged the majesty of France. Mattioli at all costs must be caught and punished, lest other Ministers of petty States might think that they too could venture on similar liberties with 'le Roi Soleil.'

The Abbé d'Estrades, bitterly mortified at the failure of a scheme in which he had taken a leading part, suggested how this vengeance might be accomplished. Even yet Mattioli was unaware that the full extent of his treachery was known to France. It was still possible to appeal to his cupidity, and, by leading him to believe that France still trusted him and was still anxious to carry out the original engagement, to decoy him to some place where his person might be seized by French agents.

This accordingly was written to Louis, and on April 27 letters were sent to Pignerol for the carrying out of this plan of d'Estrades. The Duke of Mantua, it was known, would not be unwilling that Mattioli should be punished, although he was afraid to punish him himself. Moreover, he had more than hinted, through Giuliani, another agent, that the arrest of Mattioli would be the surest way of rendering a renewal of the negotiations possible at some future date.

Mattioli himself was now at Turin, where d'Estrades was also resident, acting as French Ambassador at the Court of Savoy. He was quite unconscious that, through the Duchess of Savoy, France was fully aware of all that he had done, and continued to talk and act with d'Estrades as if the cession of Casale were still the object of his aim. He was desperately short of money, in spite of all his double-dealing, and this rendered him an easy prey.

It was arranged by d'Estrades that Mattioli should meet him outside Turin, and that they should drive together in the direction of Pignerol, in order that Catinat, whom d'Estrades represented as well supplied with money for the furtherance of the scheme for obtaining Casale on which Louis had set his heart, might ride out from that town and meet them secretly.

They drove out to the Guisiola, which was much swollen by floods, left the carriage behind with the servants, crossed the river by a footbridge after some difficulty, and went on alone to where Catinat, the minister of Louis' vengeance, was waiting for them at a little inn, just within the territory of France. There, after a short preliminary conversation, d'Estrades prudently left them and returned to Turin; the arrest was accomplished after his departure, and by two o'clock in the afternoon Mattioli was safely lodged within the walls of the *donjon* of Pignerol. This was on May 2. Two days later, in consequence of a letter written under supervision by Mattioli himself when he saw how things were going, his valet was sent after him with all his clothes and other effects, and entered into Pignerol to share his master's captivity, as no doubt he was already to some extent the sharer of his secrets. The details of Mattioli's life in prison are of no special interest, at any rate so soon as it is realised that he was not the mysterious prisoner with the iron mask. He was given the name of Lestang on entering Pignerol, the secret of his identity being kept for a time, at least as far as official despatches are concerned, even from Saint-Mars himself.

This giving of a prison name was in itself by no means an exceptional measure: it was almost always done in the case of political prisoners, whose friends

might be interested in procuring their release, and the object of it was to secure that the secret of their whereabouts should not leak out through the official staff who had access to the correspondence with headquarters about the prisons. In many cases, even with comparatively unimportant prisoners, the real name was so absolutely disused that it was quite forgotten, and in more than one instance we find the Minister writing to the governor of one of the State prisons, asking to be enlightened as to the identity of some one or other of the prisoners, the details of whose case had been forgotten through this system of prison nomenclature.

In Mattioli's case there was so little need for any mystery that the 'prison name' is before very long disused, and the events of his imprisonment are discussed quite openly under his own name in the correspondence between Louvois and the Governor of Pignerol. He was, indeed, as Mr. Andrew Lang has said, 'the least mysterious of State prisoners.' All the world knew what he had done—how he had tricked Louis in the very moment of success, and treacherously robbed him of the prey that seemed already within his grasp—and Louis' vengeance would have been only half complete had not all the world known equally that punishment had fallen upon him.

There was no sort of international complication to be feared. The arrest had taken place on French territory; there was no violation of Italian privileges; as there had been, for instance, of the privileges of Switzerland when Roux de Marsilly was arrested by Louis' agents at Zurich in 1669. The only person who could fairly be aggrieved was Mattioli's own master, Charles IV., the Duke of Mantua. But Charles had been betrayed by Mattioli equally with Louis, and was

by no means averse from condign punishment being awarded to his servant by other and stronger hands than his own. His one anxiety in later years seems to have been, not to obtain the liberation of Mattioli, but to secure that he should remain in captivity.¹ There was nothing for Louis to be afraid of in that direction, nor was the Duke of Mantua in a position to make his anger felt even if he had been aggrieved.

The whole matter was public property, and openly discussed everywhere. Within two years of the event it was all published in a brochure written in Italian, and entitled 'La Prudenza trionfante di Casale.' The very place of his imprisonment, Pignerol, was given without concealment. So, again, still more definitely, was the story told in print in 1687 in a book published at Leyden, and entitled 'L'histoire abrégée de l'Europe.' It would, in fact, be hard to find among all the prisoners of State in the reign of Louis XIV., one who on the face of things was less mysterious, and therefore less likely to be the person surrounded by the strange precautions of 'the iron mask' than was this same Ercole Mattioli, Minister of the Duke of Mantua.

Nevertheless, he has been, for the last hundred years at any rate, the candidate most generally accepted by men of letters—by all, that is to say, who have based their opinion on the actual records and have discarded the fictions of Voltaire. This has been so for three reasons. First, because Mattioli, unimportant and without mystery as he really was, was at least by far the best known of the various prisoners who can possibly be identified with the man of mystery.

¹ See the correspondence between Louis and Charles in August 1681, printed in Topin, *L'homme au Masque de Fer*, p. 343.

Imagination which had been fed with the idea of a rightful king, or at the least a royal prince, held in captivity for no other crime than his exalted birth, could accept a solution which gave them at least a Count and a Prince's Minister, more easily than that of one whose name and actions were alike unknown. Secondly, because a mistaken interpretation of a particular document led men to suppose that Mattioli had actually been one of the two prisoners conducted from Pignerol with so much mystery to Exiles, the survivor of whom was taken on to Sainte-Marguerite with precautions in no way lessened, but rather added to. Thirdly, because of the name under which the masked man was buried, Marchioly, which differs only by a single letter from Marthioly, the way in which Saint-Mars spelt the name of Mattioli. The secret so long jealously guarded was revealed at last, so they say, when death had released the victim.

The last of these reasons, the one strong point, as Mr. Lang has called it, of the case for Mattioli, is really a strong argument in the opposite direction. Political prisoners were *never* buried under their own names and ages.¹ With Saint-Mars especially it had become almost a mania. The 'Archives of the Bastille' will afford us one instance after another. The Premonstratensian Dubois was buried as Elie ('Archives,' x. 244), Dupressoir-Lamast as Pierre Masserque (x. 8), Hardy as George Ronait (xi. 198), François Esliard as Pierre Maret (x. 16). When men such as these, whose identity there was no real reason to conceal, were thus given false names at their burial, is it to be conceived

¹ This was actually a matter of law. The Governor was ordered to invent a name for all prisoners who thus died, and never to give the real name except under direct orders from the Secretary of State. See Bingham's *Bastille*, i. 27.

that the true name would be given in the case of one whose identity had been so carefully hidden with amazing precaution for so many years? It would seem more sensible to invert the argument, and to say that of one thing at least we can be certain, and that is that the name is false, and that, in just the same way as the *age* has admittedly been given wrongly for no conceivable purpose except to mislead inquirers, so also we must conclude that the true name, whatever it may have been, at least was something very different from that of Marchioly.

The second argument falls to the ground as soon as the mistake is rectified. It then becomes clear that Mattioli was *not* one of the two prisoners whose cases the king judged of sufficient importance to necessitate their being taken to Exiles, since they could not safely be left in hands less competent than those of Saint-Mars. Mattioli was left at Pignerol, and did not rejoin Saint-Mars for thirteen years. Then, at last, not because of any special importance in his own case, but because of the impending fall of the fortress of Pignerol, already besieged by Italian troops, he passes on to Sainte-Marguerite, without any special precaution and in company with the other prisoners who were then at Pignerol. So soon as he arrived at his new prison there can be but little doubt that he died. He had been ill with fever at Pignerol, and the fatigue of the journey proved too much for his strength. Of so little importance had his case become that we are made aware of his death only by a letter of Saint-Mars to the Minister, asking what should be done with the valet who had from the first shared his prison. The suggestion of the governor that he should be 'shut up in the vaulted prison' was acceded to by the

Minister. From that time onwards the name of Mattioli never again occurs in any dispatch.

It is precisely this point, that he had a valet, which affords us the convincing proof that it was really Mattioli and no other who died in 1694 and was buried at Sainte-Marguerite. The valet, as we have seen, was arrested two days after his master, and shared his prison. He was not himself actually a prisoner, except in virtue of the usage which took away their liberty for the time from those who were employed as the valets of State prisoners. In the case of one of Fouquet's valets, for instance, when the man was tired of his service and desired to return to the world, Saint-Mars was directed by Louvois not to let him go at once, but to keep him a prisoner without intercourse with anyone for some months, so that he might not carry out from the prison any news which was not already stale and useless. No other prisoner at Pignerol had a valet after Lauzun left.

Mattioli and his man were still at Pignerol and together to the end of 1693, as we learn from a despatch from Louvois to Laprade, dated December 27 of that year. In March 1694 the transfer of the prisoners was made to Sainte-Marguerite. There were three prisoners arranged for, Mattioli, Dubrenil, and de Herse, but four were actually transferred. The fourth can hardly be any other than Mattioli's valet, who had been with him at Pignerol for fourteen years. The party arrived at Sainte-Marguerite on or about April 20, having started on the 7th. On May 10 Barbezieux has already heard of the death of that one of them who had a valet, and sends the order for the servant to be shut up in the vaulted prison. Thus the proof of Mattioli's death

on his arrival at the Isles becomes almost beyond controversy.

Although by far the most popular, Mattioli was by no means the only candidate put forward during the last two centuries. Books, many of them of great learning and displaying considerable research, were published to put forward the claims of many other unfortunates who might possibly have been the man. No one has championed the Comte de Vermandois since the Père Griffet in 1769. The Duc de Beaufort was put forward by Lenglei-Dufresnoy in 1754, by Lagrange-Chancel in 1759, and by Anquetil in 1780. The Duke of Monmouth found a single but enthusiastic supporter in Sainte-Foix in 1768. Various forms of the legend as to the brother of Louis XIV. have been put forward by as many as twenty different writers—the last and most formidable of all being Alexandre Dumas in the ‘*Vicomte de Bragelonne*,’ sinning against light, for in his time the theory had long since been disproved. Foucquet was suggested by Jacob in 1840. Avedick, an ecclesiastic of the Armenian Church, who was carried off and imprisoned in France in 1706, was put forward by De Taulès in 1825, and, most surprisingly, by M. Ravaisson in recent years. As Avedick was not put into captivity until 1706, while the Masked Man died in 1703, the identification does not carry conviction. None of these persons are really possible candidates at all. No one, except Foucquet, was ever in the charge of Saint-Mars at any moment, and Foucquet’s death is well attested. They are all interesting people, and their lives afford excellent reading. Those who wish to do so can read all about them in the pages either of M. Topin or of Mr. Tighe Hopkins. They can hardly fail to be interested, but at

the same time they should remember that these entertaining stories have no possible connection at any point with the real history of the Iron Mask. It is for this reason that we now pass them by without any further notice.

Mattioli remained all through the century the leading favourite. His claims were set forward in a dozen different volumes, and when M. Topin wrote in 1869 the case seemed settled, unsatisfactory as the solution seemed to be. Then came the publication of the letter from Saint-Mars to d'Estrades, which showed conclusively—what might have been gathered from Louvois' despatches—that Mattioli did not accompany Saint-Mars to Exiles, but stayed at Pignerol. M. Topin got over the difficulty by pointing out that, at least, he rejoined Saint Mars in 1694 at Sainte-Marguerite, but the theory had really received its mortal blow, and a new series of books sprang up each propounding a new solution more in accordance with the changed evidence.

M. Loiseleur, in his '*Trois Enigmes Historiques*,' put the case against Mattioli strongly and clearly, and in his place suggested an unknown prisoner, arrested by Catinat in 1681 and brought to Pignerol. But M. Topin pointed out that there was no such prisoner at all, but that Catinat himself, for political reasons, was posing as a prisoner, and was referred to as such in the despatches on which Loiseleur relied.

M. Iung, an officer of the French army, brought out a new and elaborate study in 1872. He also rejected the theory of Mattioli with the utmost scorn, and fixed in his stead on an unknown and mysterious prisoner brought to Pignerol in 1674 with great secrecy and many precautions, whose name was never

known, and whose existence is never noticed in the despatches, unless, indeed, he is the masked prisoner. This prisoner he identified after the most careful and protracted researches with one Oldendorf, who sometimes used the name of Marchiel, the very name under which the Iron Mask was buried. He was connected with the 'Empoisonneurs,' and, perhaps, was the chief among them; was arrested at Péronne in March 1673 and taken to the Bastille in April. M. Iung suggested, but could not prove, that he was identical with the mysterious prisoner taken to Pignerol in March 1674. This hypothesis has since been proved untenable, and with it the whole of M. Iung's theory falls to the ground. His book, however, remains of the highest value for the documents which it contains, and no serious student of the subject can afford to leave it unread.

MM. Burgaud and Bazaries, writing in 1883, take up the theory of M. Iung that the solution is to be sought through the mysterious prisoner of 1674. They have discovered the key to the cypher used by Louis XIV., and so have proved that this prisoner was not Oldendorf or Marchiel as M. Iung suggested, but a certain General de Bulonde, who was awarded this punishment for his mistake or cowardice in raising the siege of Cuneo. They suggested, therefore, that *he* was the real Man of the Mask. But the publication of the name of de Bulonde at once brought out the fact that the general was still alive two years after 1703,¹ and also that he was living at liberty in Paris as early as 1675. He must, therefore, have been given his freedom almost directly, and cannot be the masked prisoner.

¹ M. Geoffroy de Grandmaison in the *Univers*, January 9, 1895.

In 1890 appeared the careful study of M. J. Lair on Nicolas Fouquet. The identity of 'the Man in the Iron Mask' came naturally within his subject, though only as a side issue. Like all other recent writers, he would have nothing to do with the idea that Mattioli could be the man, and for the first time showed that the evidence, fairly considered, could only point to 'Eustache Dauger,' a prisoner who had been at one time allowed to act as Fouquet's valet, and who came to Pignerol in 1669. One after another all inquirers had passed him by, as having no importance in himself, since he was 'only a servant,' and as obviously possessed of no real secret, since he was allowed to act as Fouquet's valet. He had been rejected by all as offering too little opening for any romantic story, but, at the same time, the evidence in his favour is so overwhelming that one can only wonder that it should have been left to M. Lair to fix upon him as, after all, the only possible man.

Mr. Andrew Lang followed in 1903 with 'The Valet's Tragedy.' He accepted M. Lair's conclusions and attempted to carry the investigation a step further, but went off on a wrong track which led nowhere, except so far as it opened up other interesting problems of a fascinating character. Mr. Lang came within an ace of the truth when he wrote in a footnote (p. 28), 'One marvels that nobody has recognised, in the mask, James Stuart (James de la Cloche), eldest of the children of Charles II. He came to England in 1668, was sent to Rome, and "disappears from history."' He was very 'warm,' as they say in the children's game, when he wrote that passage, but he failed to follow up the clue he had thus suggested, and left the mystery unsolved.

The latest writer on the subject, M. Funck-Brentano, has gone back to the utterly discredited hypothesis of Mattioli. He has brought no new evidence of importance to bear, but he makes up in assertion for all that is lacking in his argument. He is, of course, quite within his right in trying to furbish up a case which seems hopelessly lost, but he is not justified in saying as he does, again and again, in articles in magazines and encyclopædias as well as in his book, that the theory he is setting forward—which as a matter of fact has found no advocate of importance except himself for thirty years and more—‘has been declared exact, with a voice that is unanimous, by the criticism of the day.’ That assertion is the direct opposite of the truth, and is not worthy of one who is himself a learned and painstaking writer on the subjects of which he treats. If M. Funck-Brentano, instead of trying always to ‘make out a case’ for the theory he prefers, had printed the whole of the evidence bearing on the question, neither his book nor his articles could ever have seen the light. To write as he has done has not merely contributed nothing to the solution of the problem, but has only made it more difficult for other and more ingenuous searchers to arrive at the object of their desires.

CHAPTER III

THE REAL WEARER OF THE MASK

ON the lower slopes of the Alps, some twenty miles to the south-east of Turin, close to the spot where the river Po takes its rise, stands the little town and fortress of Pignerol, or Pinerolo as the Italians call it to-day. This town in the seventeenth century was an important outpost of the French power, and a constant menace to the peace of Italy from the facility it gave to Louis to mass his troops on the southern side of the Alpine barrier, ready at any moment to make a descent upon the plains of Lombardy and Savoy. The fortifications, modified by Vauban, who came to the place for the purpose with Louvois in 1670, included within the walls a town, a citadel, and a *donjon*, or keep. Access to the town and citadel were given by two gates, the one leading towards France by the pass of the Val Chisone, the other towards Italy and Turin. There was a third gate, but not open for public use, which gave access to the *donjon* only, without any need of passing through the town or citadel. It was by this secret and mysterious way—generally in the dead of night—that prisoners of importance came to Pignerol, or were released therefrom. No one in the town could say with accuracy how many prisoners of State the *donjon* held at any given moment, or even whether any were there at all.

The town, citadel, and *donjon* were each under a separate commander, supreme to some extent within his own command, and each were garrisoned by separate bodies of troops. At the period with which we have to do, from 1669 onward, the Marquis de Piennes was the Governor-General, and he was succeeded in 1674 by the Marquis d'Herleville. With these we have but little to do. It is with the *donjon*, and it alone, that we are immediately concerned. Here the commander was M. de Saint-Mars, an ex-mousquetaire, and the captain of a 'free company' who formed the guard of the *donjon* and were under Saint-Mars' sole command. There were other troops in the citadel—all French of course—but the population both of the town and of the surrounding district were Italian in race and speech.

Saint-Mars was supreme in all respects within the *donjon*, and looked for his orders directly to the Minister of War, who was at this time the Marquis de Louvois. His special charge was the safe-keeping of the prisoners committed to his care, for the *donjon* of Pignerol was one of the places to which State prisoners of importance were often sent. He was a soldier of fortune, not well born, but self-made; a man whose one object in life was to carry out his master's orders, and who was not too particular or tender-hearted to carry them out entirely. He owed his position largely to the fact that his wife's sister was Louvois' mistress, and in consequence Louvois was always ready to advance his interests and to gloss over any errors he might commit.

Saint-Mars was, however, a man singularly suited by temperament and training for the work that he was set to do. Renneville, who was in his hands at the

Bastille, has left us a very unsympathetic portrait of him in later life, which may or may not be just, for Renneville is a liar of the first water. 'He was a little old man, very thin, his head, hands, and all his body shaking, and received us very courteously. He held out his shaking hand to me and put it into mine. It was as cold as ice, which made me say, within myself, "This is an ill-omen; death, or its substitute, enters into alliance with me." He was a very ugly little man, and ill-shaped, and look'd to be near eighty years of age when I saw him first, bow'd, shaking, and terribly hasty, swearing and blaspheming continually, and to appearance always in a passion, hard-hearted, inexorable, and cruel in the highest degree.'¹

This charge of cruelty at least does not seem to be justified, for there is no record which bears it out. Louvois, on the other hand, is more than once surprised by his forbearance. A prisoner, especially a discharged prisoner, full of venom against his gaolers, and writing in a place of safety, is hardly the best evidence of the disposition of his late superiors.

The lower functionaries of the prison come off even worse than the governor at Renneville's hands, and of some of them, since they followed Saint-Mars' fortunes as he moved from place to place, and were, therefore, the constant guardians of the 'Iron Mask,' it may be worth while to give his description, though many grains of salt would seem to be desirable before taking them as literal truth.

M. de Formanoir, called Corbe, Saint-Mars' nephew, was one of the lieutenants of his company, and followed him from Sainte-Marguerite to the

¹ Renneville, *The French Inquisition*, Amsterdam, 1715. English translation, p. 52.

Bastille. He had not yet joined his uncle when the latter was at Pignerol, but he was an important personage in later years. 'His forehead, which is not above an inch broad, looks like a slip of burnt parchment, under which are sunk two little eyes, like those of a roasted pig, as black as sloes. He has a nose sharp at the end, the nostrils gaping like extinguishers. He can easily hear himself talk, for his mouth reaches to his ears; his mouth takes up two-thirds of his face; his teeth are all rotten, being dyed as black as ebony with continual smoaking of tobacco. When he laughs, he opens his mouth and shuts his eyes after a ridiculous manner. He goes bent upon a pair of trapstick legs, crook'd like a beagle's; and yet his mind is more mishapen and distorted than his body.'¹

Lécuyer, Captain of the Gates in after years at the Bastille, was in 1670 a soldier of the Free Company and employed as Saint-Mars' coachman. 'His shoulders were thick and round, like the bottom of a kettle-drum, level with his head, which seemed sunk down between them. . . . His face, all in ups and downs, and cross-ways, like musick, look'd more like that of a lion turning about than a man. His cheeks were so puffed out that he resembled the cherub sounding the trumpet to the Last Judgment, bating that it wanted much of being so beautiful. His nose was like the end of a great saucidge, and all his countenance, painted over with a dark red, seem'd to be one of the masks used at the Opera when devils just brought from hell are brought upon the stage. His whole shape, thick, short, and truss, was rather round than square. He wore his own hair, whereof, notwithstanding his great age, not one was yet grey. It

is true that had there been any of that colour, they could not have been distinguished, they were so steeped in grease; besides that, there were only a few about his ears and on the back part of his head, all the rest being as bare as a man's knee.'¹

Rosarges, Major of the Bastille in 1702, and Antoine Ru, who was one of the turnkeys, both of whom had been with Saint-Mars for many years (Rosarges for more than thirty), are described by Renneville together. 'The five doors leading to my apartment being open'd I saw a monster come in, follow'd by a satyr, for so the two men that came to visit me may be called. The first that enter'd had his chops puff'd up, his forehead look'd like the bark of a tree on which the small pox had carv'd the alcoran, his eyes sunk, as if they had been at the bottom of two boxes to throw dice, under two eyebrows an inch broad, were red and frightful; his nose all carv'd and turning up like the foot of an earthen pot, loaded with 20 or 30 other noses of all colours, look'd like a bursten medlar, over his mouth, whose blewish lips, set with little rubies and pearls, stuck out like double wreaths, that is, the upper level with his nose, and the lower cover'd part of his chin which was cover'd with hair blacker than jett. His short truss carcase could scarce support itself, the great quantity of brandy he had drank making it totter. The satyr was in his shirt and drawers, without any other covering on his head but a thick clod of hair of the colour of brass, standing up on end, and looking as if it had not been comb'd in a year. The same sort of hair, of a redder hew, cover'd all his face, up to his very eyes, which were all edg'd round with scarlet, yet through that hair it appear'd that his

¹ Renneville, *op. cit.* p. 54.

hollow cheeks were as full of pleats as a set ruff; and his mouth, sticking out like that of a black, when it open'd, discovered a yellow and uneven row of teeth. I afterwards understood that the monster's name was James Rosarge, whom the Governor had constituted Major, and the satyr Anthony Ru, who was one of the servants called turnkeys and was to attend upon me, both of them Provencals; worse I cannot name, King Henry the Fourth was wont to say.' ¹

These enticing portraits are, of course, of a much later date than that with which we are at present concerned, and perhaps in 1669 they were better looking and more attractive than in 1702, but as no description of them at that earlier date has come down to us we must do our best to reconstruct their appearance from these portraits of a later date.

At Pignerol Saint-Mars' principal subordinates were the four lieutenants of his company, Saint-Martin, Blainvilliers (Saint-Mars' cousin), Dufresne (another cousin), and Duplessis. All of these were promoted to other posts, and none went on with him to Exiles.

The *donjon* of Pignerol consisted of three blocks of buildings enclosing a courtyard on three sides, the fourth side being shut in by a high wall. At the ends, the corners, and in the centre of the middle building were five towers, two of which were used as prisons. The first tower was the chapel, with loggias in the upper storey, which were approached from Saint-Mars' apartments, and whence the prisoners could hear Mass without seeing each other or being visible from below. The whole of this wing was given up to Saint-Mars, while the opposite wing provided officers' quarters for the lieutenants. The central building, with access

¹ *Ibid.* p. 30.

from the courtyard, was the quarters of the Free Company, while the southern tower, approached by a staircase from below, belonged to M. de Rissan, the lieutenant of the citadel, and had nothing to do with the *donjon* proper.

Of the two towers which were used as prisons, the upper, at the western angle, was the better and more cheerful. Here were the apartments of the two prisoners of rank whom the *donjon* held, M. Foucquet, formerly Minister of Finance, and M. de Lauzun, about both of whom we shall have more to say later on. The other and lower tower, the *tour d'en bas*, was in the centre of the long side of the building and faced towards the citadel. It was occupied for the most part by prisoners of lower rank and less importance, but owing to its position was much the more secure of the two towers in case any attempt at escape might be attempted. Each tower had three stories, and there was as a rule only one large chamber on each stage—though in the lower floors of the upper tower this chamber was probably divided up into smaller rooms.

The regulations of this prison were very rigorous. No communication was allowed without special permission with either the citadel or the town. The drawbridge was always raised. A sentinel was continually on guard at the foot of each tower and another one outside. Saint-Mars from his apartment, and his lieutenants from their quarters, could alike command a view of the towers, and see that no breach of discipline took place at any time. The separation from the outside world was as definite as could be arranged.

Such was the *donjon* of Pignerol and its *personnel* when, in July 1669, Saint-Mars received a

notice from Louvois, the Minister to whom he was responsible, bidding him prepare at once to receive another prisoner of State. This was a man of no great importance apparently, so far as worldly position was concerned, but one whom it was necessary for the king's service to guard with all the precautions that could possibly be devised. He was to come from Dunkirk, a place as far distant from Pignerol as any place in France could possibly be, and so the journey would naturally take some time. He would be brought by the Sieur de Vauroy, the king's lieutenant at Dunkirk. There was no crime alleged against him, nor was it said of him, as often in similar cases, that he was a rascal whom the king desired to punish. The principal thing that was impressed upon Saint-Mars about him was that he must on no account whatever be given an opportunity of telling what he knew—*ses nouvelles*—to any living soul, not even to Saint-Mars himself. A prison was therefore to be prepared for him where he would have no opportunity for communicating with anyone in any way. It must have no windows out of which he could look so as to make signals to those without. In like manner, it must be shut off by thick doors lest any sound of voice should pass out from within. No one must see him but Saint-Mars, who must be in attendance daily to carry him his food with his own hands. Even with Saint-Mars himself his intercourse must be strictly limited. He may talk, but it may only be about his own needs. If he should attempt at any time to tell Saint-Mars or anyone else 'that on which he was employed before he came to Pignerol,' he is to be told that it will cost him his life. Saint-Mars is to provide furniture as may be necessary, but no great outlay will be required, for he is only a

servant—not a great personage. His name is not given, though at a later date he was called ‘Eustache Dauger.’

A very slight acquaintance with the police arrangements of the seventeenth century in France is enough to assure us of one point. Whatever the man’s real name may have been, we may be quite sure it had no resemblance to Eustache Dauger. Quite insignificant prisoners were given ‘prison names,’ and always spoken of by these in the official correspondence. In the case of a prisoner so mysterious and important as this one, who has been brought right across the whole country of France to the prison that has been chosen for him, Louvois will not have risked the solution of the mystery by giving his real name. ‘Eustache Dauger’ is a name by which he was called—the name by which Saint-Mars will know him later on. But we may be quite sure it was not the name by which he was known in the world in which he lived before, and it is almost equally improbable that he had really been a servant. His track, we may be sure, was covered up in every possible way, and no clue will have been given in the official correspondence. The statement that he has been a servant means only that he is not to be treated as a man of quality, and at the same time suggests a plausible reason for his incarceration. A confidential servant often learns more of his master’s secrets than is consistent with the safety either of his master or, perhaps, of his master’s friends.

By August 21 the prisoner has arrived. His real prison is not yet finished, but he has been shut up ‘in a very sure place’ and has been cautioned by Saint-Mars in the presence of M. de Vauroy that if ever he attempts to speak on any subject except his own

necessities, he will promptly be run through by Saint-Mars' sword.

The great precautions which were being taken, including the alterations which were being made to render yet more secure a prison which had always hitherto been thought sufficiently guarded, caused people to talk and to wonder who this new prisoner could be. Greater care, by far, was being taken for his safety than had ever been thought necessary for Foucquet or afterwards would be for Lauzun. People came to Saint-Mars and worried him with questions, asking whether it was a Marshal of France that was now shut up, and all sorts of other surmises, until Saint-Mars writes to Louvois to say that in self-defence he has been obliged to invent 'fairy tales' (*contes jaunes*) to tell them and to satisfy their curiosity. The prisoner had asked for a book of prayers, which shows that he had some education, and leave is given by Louvois to give him this and any other books he desires. He is not treated badly, not put in *la prison dure*, as Louvois' custom generally was with new comers, to break their spirit or to extract confessions, only he is condemned, lest he should tell his secret, to the most absolutely solitary confinement, never setting eyes on any living creature except Saint-Mars, and seeing him only once in every day.

Great as was the confidence which Louvois generally reposed in Saint-Mars, it was not so great as to prevent his keeping up a service of spies to report upon what went on and to keep him advised of everything that happened. In March 1670, when the new prisoner had been at Pignerol about six months, he writes to say that Saint-Mars' vigilance has been ineffective. One of the servants of M. Foucquet has

spoken to the man of mystery, and has asked him whether he had not something of importance to communicate. True, he obtained no answer, the prisoner only telling him to go away and leave him in peace, but that, no doubt, so Louvois thought, was because he believed the man to be one of Saint-Mars' agents, and the same might not happen the next time. Saint-Mars must take more precautions—for it is of real importance to the king that this prisoner should have no possibility of communicating in any way with the outside world. The poor man had probably every reason to wish that Foucquet's valet had left him alone. Saint-Mars was not the man to allow his prospects to be endangered by any similar occurrence in the future, and the precautions, which already seemed so excessive, were, no doubt, redoubled.

The prisoner had, however, so far as we can judge, no desire whatever to make his secret known, and does not seem at any time throughout his long captivity to have attempted to reveal anything. The months passed away quite uneventfully so far as he was concerned, though Lauzun, in the other tower, was keeping Saint-Mars always in a fever of apprehension. At last Saint-Mars came to realise that all these precautions were rather needless. 'The prisoner who was brought by M. de Vauroy,' he wrote to Louvois in 1673, when 'Dauger' had been in prison for four years and a half, 'says nothing and lives content, like a man altogether resigned to do the will of God and the King.' The long solitary confinement was, however, telling upon his health, and Saint-Mars, who already seems to have begun to form the attachment for his prisoner which becomes more marked later on, would have been glad to allow him some kind of companionship. The want

of it, as Saint-Mars had good reason to know, often resulted in driving men mad.

Nothing at this period was causing the governor more anxiety than the provision of proper servants for his two prisoners of rank. Many men, naturally enough, objected to being shut up in prison when they had committed no crime, merely in order that they might wait upon their betters. Saint-Mars had bribed some of them to watch their masters and to bring him word of all their doings. Even so, they had played him false, he had found none of them trustworthy from his point of view, and they had persisted in remaining faithful to their masters and even in acting as go-betweens, so far as that was possible under Saint-Mars' system, between them and the outside world.

The prisoners themselves again, especially Lauzun, gave their gaoler a world of anxiety; he never knew what might be attempted, but the valets were an almost greater trouble to him. Since they would not play the spy satisfactorily he had to do it himself. He had holes bored above all the doors of their masters' apartments so that he could look in at any moment without the occupants being aware. There was a pear-tree, too, close to the windows of Lauzun, whose foliage was thick and luxuriant. Up that tree the governor would climb, hiding himself behind the leaves and peering out through their interstices into the chamber which Lauzun occupied. While the summer lasted he was happy. Nothing could go on in that chamber without his knowledge. But autumn came on and the leaves fell, and this post of vantage was now impossible.¹

¹ See the correspondence on this point with Louvois in Delort, *Histoire de la Détention des Philosophes*, p. 43.

Saint-Mars was in despair. There was no one to fall back upon except the valets who had so often played him false, and perhaps, happy thought, the confessors of his prisoners. These could not, of course, divulge what they had learned in confession, but they could talk to their penitents out of confession and then come and tell Saint-Mars what they had learned. One such pliant priest he actually found, *un homme de bien*, as he wrote to Louvois, but Lauzun was not easy to manage even in this respect. He would have none of the confessors the governor wanted, and would be satisfied only with a Capuchin, and when the Capuchin was given him pulled his beard smartly to make sure he was real and not another priest made up for the part.¹

All these difficulties made Saint-Mars wonder whether he could not kill two birds with one stone by using the mysterious prisoner, whom Louvois it will be remembered had described as a servant, to attend on one or other of his more exalted charges. There is no suggestion that he would have been willing to act as spy, but he would save the necessity of finding suitable men from outside, and he would at the same time himself be in a captivity far less monotonous and difficult to bear, and far more beneficial to his health than that which he was then undergoing.

Saint-Mars, accordingly, made the proposition to Louvois in 1672 that he should be thus employed as Lauzun's valet. 'He would make, it seems to me,' he wrote, 'a very good valet. I don't think he would tell M. de Lauzun whence he comes, after what I have said to him, and I am sure that he would not tell him any news. He would not ever ask to go out of the

¹ Saint Simon, *Mémoires*, xiii. p. 73.

prison for all his life, as all the others do.' This request Louvois refused. Lauzun was not a person whom 'Dauger' could be allowed to speak to. But in 1675 when Saint-Mars renewed his petition, this time with regard to Foucquet instead of Lauzun, it was granted, although rather grudgingly. In case of necessity and not otherwise, 'Dauger' might be put as one of Foucquet's valets. But the greatest care must be taken that he sees Foucquet only, and no one else whatever. Lauzun in particular he must never meet, nor must he have any opportunity of speaking to any other person. Foucquet, apparently, might be trusted with Dauger's secret. Perhaps he knew something of it already, at any rate, as an ex-Minister of the Crown, he knew so many political secrets of importance, that he might well be trusted with just one more.

It looks as if, for the moment at any rate, the secret which 'Dauger' held—'the business on which he had been employed before he came to Pignerol'—had lost its importance to some degree in the six years that had passed. Not even Foucquet, we may suppose, would have been allowed to learn that secret when 'Dauger' first came to Pignerol in 1669. It may be of some use for us to remember, when later on we come to discuss the question what that secret was, that in 1675 it had apparently lost some part of its value, though it seems to have regained it all a few years later. It was a good thing in any case for poor 'Eustache,' for the change of scene and steady work in Foucquet's rooms, even if not altogether congenial, must have come as a great relief after the weary days and awful solitude of the *tour d'en bas*. He had a fellow-servant, de la Rivière, to keep him company; had a man of parts who had held a great position in

the world on whom to wait, with whom, no doubt, if he was, as he seems to have been, a man of intelligence and education, he would be allowed a certain intercourse; had light rooms to live in instead of a dreary dungeon; and as much good food as he desired from what was left over from Foucquet's table. His lot, even now, was hardly cheerful, but it was far better than of old, and by no means insupportable. But, now that he has entered upon this new life, we will keep his companions and what we can learn of the details of his daily routine for the next chapter.

CHAPTER IV

FOUCQUET AND LAUZUN

THERE is no more striking contrast offered by the history of France in the seventeenth century—scarcely, perhaps, by the history of any country at any period—than that which is presented by the downfall and disgrace of Fouquet, the great Minister of Finance under Mazarin and Anne of Austria.

Fouquet was born in Paris in 1615, the son of a French nobleman, who had been high in the confidence of Richelieu. It was only natural, under these circumstances, that he should have been educated for an official career, and after holding many minor posts, he was called to Paris in 1648 as intendant for the municipality, a post which brought him into contact with the political leaders of the day. His financial ability attracted the notice of Mazarin, and through the influence of this patron he was, in 1650, given the important post of Procureur-Général to the Parlement. To this was added three years later the yet higher office of Surintendant des Finances, at first with a colleague, Cellier, but after 1659 alone.

In that office, the most important in many ways that France could offer, he set himself to reorganise the finances, which were just then in bad order, owing to the long wars and the maladministration of the

previous period. In this work he succeeded marvelously, and France grew rich again under his care. At the same time, however, Fouquet took care that, while he improved the finances of his country, his own private finances should not suffer, and no small portion of the general revenue was diverted into his own coffers—so that he became with great rapidity one of the richest and most powerful men in all France. He stood at the height of his glory when Mazarin died in 1661, and the way seemed then to stand open for him to wield all the power that Mazarin and Richelieu had held before, and to be all, and more than all, than they had been to France. The young king, Louis XIV., was at this time aged twenty-three, and so far had shown little interest in the affairs of State. Fouquet was by far the most brilliant figure at the Court. He held the finances in his hand, and from them could draw all that he needed for his own purposes. He promised himself that he would rule the king as well as his kingdom, and would become Chancellor in Mazarin's place. For this, indeed, he had long been preparing. He held one of the strong places of France, the fortress of Belle Isle, under his own power; he disposed, in person or through his relations, of Calais and of Amiens, of Havre, of Guingamp and Mont St. Michel, and many other towns besides. Through the Marquis de Gesvres he had influence over the royal guards; through Crêqui he was supreme over the fleets of the Mediterranean, and through Admiral de Neuchèse over those of the Atlantic. Brittany was almost his own kingdom, so great was his influence there; and his houses at Vaux and Saint-Mandé were more magnificent than any that the king possessed. After his arrest plans were found in his handwriting

which laid down the lines for a veritable civil war in case his ambition could not be gratified in any other way, and in case of failure he had provided as a last resource and place of refuge the Island of Santa Lucia in the West Indies of America.

But Foucquet had left just one point out of consideration, and that was the character of the king. From the day that Mazarin died that character was seen to have undergone a change. The young king, hitherto devoted only to pleasure and to the chase, gave it out at the Council of State that henceforth he would be king in fact as well as in name, and that he meant to be his own Prime Minister. The Court, even his own mother, laughed incredulously, but they soon saw that the king meant to keep his word. Five hours a day with the utmost regularity, a regularity with which nothing was allowed to interfere, were devoted to the business of the State, and Louis, by his attention to detail, soon knew, as well as any, all that was going on. Either Foucquet must moderate his ambition and restrict his peculations from the public purse, or else it was clear to Louis' mind that there was no room for both of them at once in France. He was definitely anxious to retain Foucquet, and Foucquet's genius in his service, if only Foucquet would be content to be his servant, but that was just what Foucquet could never bring himself to be. Warnings were given to him, but they passed unheeded, and the inevitable catastrophe rapidly approached. The old falsifications of the accounts still continued, public money flowed just as before into Foucquet's purse, and day by day, as they were made, these defalcations were discovered by Colbert, and duly explained to the king himself.

The blow fell in September of that same year, 1661, rendered possible by Fouquet's own folly. As Procureur of the Parlement he enjoyed the privilege of immunity from arrest, and Louis could not easily attack him. But just at this juncture, instigated thereto by the king himself, Fouquet stripped himself of this protection. He sold the office to M. d'Harlay for the sum of 1,400,000 francs. '*Tout va bien,*' cried Louis exultingly when he heard the news; '*il s'enferme de lui-même.*' Without the protection of the Parlement he was at the king's mercy, and with no great delay he was arrested at Nantes in the Place de la Cathédrale, September 5, the king having gone thither with his Ministers to meet the Estates of Brittany.

The trial of Fouquet for maladministration and corruption was the *cause célèbre* of the seventeenth century. Louis was determined to obtain a conviction at any cost, for he felt he was not really king so long as Fouquet remained at large and in possession of his power and influence. But he found it by no means an easy undertaking to get his will, even now that he had secured the prisoner's arrest. A special court was formed to try him, and for three years the process dragged its weary length along. He was accused of treason and preparing civil war, as well as of maladministration. The latter charge was easily established, the former was in the main untrue and even absurd. Every effort was made, however, on the part of the king to get each alike accepted, and Louis made no secret that he desired a sentence of death. The king's efforts failed. Justice had not fallen so low in France in the seventeenth century as it had in England, and not even Louis' influence could secure a condemnation which his judges held unjust. Fouquet

was found guilty, but not on the graver charge, only on that of malversation of finance. Even so, nine of his judges voted for the death penalty, but the majority were more merciful. After all, on this point of enriching himself and his family out of public funds, what Minister's hands in that century were wholly clean? They condemned him to perpetual banishment, and confiscated all his goods for the service of the king.

Louis himself it was who added to the punishment they had inflicted. 'Had they condemned him to death,' he said to Mademoiselle de la Vallière, 'I should have let him die.' He could not do that, but at least he could secure the silence of death in another way. 'Since it would not be safe,' he said, 'to let Fouquet go out of the kingdom, seeing the great knowledge he possessed of most important State affairs,' he commuted the sentence of banishment inflicted by the Court into one of perpetual imprisonment. Fouquet's life was left to him indeed, but that was all.

Pignerol was named as the place of his confinement, the most outlying and distant fortress in all France, and thither he was taken at once, in the depth of winter though it was. When, on January 16, 1665, the fortress was reached at last, he entered it, never again to come forth from prison until his death in 1680. Saint-Mars, who was to be his gaoler to the end, had himself taken possession only a month before, for the express purpose of receiving his illustrious, and at this time his only, captive.

For some years the imprisonment of Fouquet was exceedingly rigorous.¹ No communication was allowed

¹ See the correspondence between Louvois and Saint-Mars, printed in Delort, *Détention des philosophes*; also Ravaillon, *Archives de la Bastille*, vol. iii.

to take place between the prisoner and any person whatsoever. He was never allowed to see any visitor, nor ever to leave his rooms, even merely for the sake of exercise. No ink was allowed him, no pens, no paper. As to books, he might have one at a time, but it was carefully inspected before and after, lest any communication should be thus permitted. For service he was allowed a valet, always under the condition that this valet shared his captivity and was allowed no greater liberty than himself, and no greater privilege of any kind, except that they paid him 600 francs a year by way of wage.

The first months passed away without much to notice. Only Saint-Mars was disquieted about Foucquet's confessor. There was the one inevitable breach in the otherwise impenetrable wall of secrecy. Not even Louis himself could venture to refuse this spiritual comfort to the meanest of his prisoners. True, he could choose the confessor, and could restrict the frequency of his coming, but there his power ended. Once in the year at least, during the Paschal season, by the laws of the Church which bound king and prisoner alike, the opportunity must be given to every one for confession and communion. The clemency of Louis allowed Foucquet to confess four times a year. His confessor was the tutor to the Commissary of War, M. Damorezan, who was placed there by Louvois to act as spy upon Saint-Mars, and make to him an independent report of all that went on in Pignerol.

Six months after his arrival something occurred to break the monotony of Foucquet's life, but scarcely in an agreeable manner. In the middle of June, in the course of a great thunderstorm, the citadel was struck and the powder magazine exploded. Part of the

donjon itself was destroyed by the explosion, and many of the soldiers were buried under the *débris*. The walls of Foucquet's chamber were thrown down, and Saint-Mars feared that his prisoner must have lost his life. They found him, however, safe and sound, in the embrasure of a window, not having sustained even so much as a bruise. In consequence of the damage that had been done, and while the work of reparation was being completed, he was moved to the neighbouring fortress of Pérouse, and did not come back to Pignerol for nearly a year, when all was once more ready to receive him.

The closeness of his confinement wearied him to death, and he set himself with much ingenuity to overcome his dulness. With soot dissolved in wine he made some ink, and a feather from a chicken at his dinner provided him with a pen. With these he wrote upon a handkerchief and hid it at the back of his chair. He even made some other ink that only appeared on being warmed, and covered with writing the margins of his books. But the vigilance of Saint-Mars soon discovered what he was doing. Handkerchief and books alike were sent for the king's inspection, and still greater precautions were employed for the future. Ribbons and tapes, formerly white, were henceforth always black, as was also the lining of his clothes. For the present any further attempt at writing became impossible.

In 1670 there was an attempt to rescue Foucquet, made by his old and faithful servant Laforêt, aided by a man of the name of Honneste. They were well supplied with money, and had succeeded in winning over some of the soldiers who were employed as sentinels. Then, somehow or other, the affair came to the ears of Saint-Mars. Honneste and Laforêt had

already fled to Turin, but they were arrested there at Saint-Mars' instance and sent back to Pignerol. A court-martial was held and acted on the spot. Laforêt was condemned and hanged—faithful to his master even unto death. Honneste was retained in captivity, and seemingly not treated with great severity. Could it have been by his means that the plot had been found out?

Foucquet, broken by misfortune and his long captivity, became henceforward more tractable. The anxieties of his gaoler on his behalf were sensibly lessened. But now there came to Pignerol, to add to Saint-Mars' troubles, another distinguished prisoner by far less amenable than the first. This was the Comte de Lauzun, the lover of la grande Mademoiselle, sent to Pignerol among other offences as a punishment for thus raising his eyes above the level to which his rank entitled him. 'I used to think,' writes poor Saint-Mars to Louvois in July 1672, 'that M. Foucquet was one of the most wicked prisoners a man could have, but now that M. de Lauzun has arrived, I see that by comparison he is indeed a lamb.'

The Duc de Lauzun was one of the most singular characters in the Court of Louis XIV., a standing illustration, as has been remarked, of the truth that fact is stranger than fiction. 'It is not lawful even to dream,' writes la Bruyère about him, 'as this man lived.' He was the younger son of a noble Gascon family, and came to Court in 1647, when he was fourteen years of age, 'unburdened with money or scruples, and determined to push his way to the front.'

At the Court he was placed in the charge of his cousin the Maréchal de Grammont, and in his service

received such education as a young nobleman of those days ordinarily had—that is to say, he learned to fence, to ride, to dance, and to make pretty speeches to a lady.¹ He does not seem to have been handsome, if at least we may judge from the description which has been left us by one who was madly in love with him, and therefore would be more likely to flatter him than the reverse. ‘He is a small man,’ wrote Mademoiselle, ‘but nobody can deny that he has a most pleasing and upright figure. His legs are well shaped; his hair is scanty, fair but tinged with grey, badly brushed and often greasy; he has fine blue eyes, which are often bloodshot; a distinguished air and a pleasing expression. His smile is charming. The tip of his nose is pointed and red. . . . He is very slovenly in his dress; when he takes pains he looks very well. There is the man!’²

His character fitted well with his face and appearance; he was sharp as a needle, but wanting in self-control; a great favourite with women, but disliked by the men; and, though essentially ignorant, a good talker and of a ready wit. In many ways he was a *poseur*, and laid himself out to produce an effect upon his hearers. ‘He would sometimes array himself in a dressing-gown with his mantle thrown over it; a full-bottomed wig and a nightcap on the top, and a plumed hat to crown it all; and in this guise he would walk up and down his rooms to see if any of the servants dared to laugh at him, and woe to the knave who even smiled!’

¹ For the whole of this description of Lauzun and ‘la grande Mademoiselle’ I am much indebted to Mr. G. F. Bradley, *The Great Days of Versailles*.

² *Mémoires de Mademoiselle de Montpensier*.

To the general rule that he was no favourite with the men, one great exception must be made. By constant abject flattery he gained the king, and became the one and only favourite that Louis ever had. At twenty-four he commanded a regiment, at thirty-six he was promised the important post of *grand maître de l'artillerie*, but lost it by his own imprudence in talking of the honour that was coming to him before it was actually bestowed. The matter came to the ears of Louvois, the Secretary for War, just before the Council meeting at which Louis had intended to make the appointment. He rushed at once to the king, told him that he himself could never work with Lauzun, and got the king to change his mind. Lauzun, wild with fury, went to Madame de Montespan and asked her help. Later on, suspecting that after all she was playing him false, he managed to conceal himself in her rooms, and thus to be present at an interview which she had with the king, from which it appeared that his suspicions were fully justified. He had a furious scene afterwards with de Montespan, and called her every evil name he could think of, and then going to the king, told him he would never serve a master who perjured himself for a harlot, took his sword and broke it across his knee. Louis rose to the occasion. He threw the cane he was carrying out of the window, saying he declined to use it on the person of a man of quality. And with these words he left the room.

For this outbreak Lauzun was sent to the Bastille, and stayed there a couple of months; but the end of that period found him back at Court and once more in favour. Then began the strange romance of his life. He was now six-and-thirty, and the year was 1669. Mademoiselle de Montpensier, *la grande Mademoiselle*

as people called her, the niece of Louis XIII., and first cousin of the king—being the only daughter and heiress of his father's younger brother Gaston, Duke of Orleans—fell head over ears in love with *le petit homme*, as she used to call De Lauzun. True, she was ten years his senior, but of what consequence was that? 'Women of my rank,' she said, 'are always young.' She made up her mind for herself without waiting to be asked, and has left us the account in her Memoirs. 'After carefully considering all the "pros" and "cons,"' she writes, 'my heart settled the matter, and it was at the Récollets that I formed my final resolution. . . . The next day, which was March 2, I was very happy.' That Lauzun would also 'be willing,' was at this stage taken for granted.

In fact, however, the quarry was not so easy to secure as her vanity had expected. She took him aside, and gave him his chance plainly. 'I led him to a window; his proud bearing made him the king of all the world for me.' She hinted that she was not averse to marriage, but she would like to have his advice on the subject. People were saying that the king thought of marrying her, the richest heiress in Europe, to the Prince of Lorraine. What did Lauzun think on the subject? Lauzun feigned obtuseness, though he saw plainly enough what she was after. He gave his approval most emphatically to the idea that she should marry, but his language was hardly that of the burning devotion she desired to inspire. 'Nothing,' he told her, 'is so absurd as an old maid of forty who dresses and enjoys herself like a girl of fifteen. At that age a woman should go into a convent, or turn *dévoté*, or at least dress herself modestly and give up being frivolous. Vespers, sermons, the poor and the sick should be her

distractions. But if she marries, then all is quite different. Then, of course, she will dress herself like the others to please her husband, and go to balls and so forth, not for her own amusement, but because he would wish her to do as others do.'

The courtship dawdled on—pressed rather on the side of the lady than of the swain—until in June of the following year, 'Madame,' the Duchess of Orleans, died suddenly, and her husband, looking for a successor, turned his eyes upon his wealthy cousin. Mademoiselle was quite determined. She meant to have Lauzun or else nobody, but Lauzun was less determined, and held back. He was afraid of the king's displeasure, and all that that displeasure might mean. No hint could pierce his obtuseness, and, since she could not inspire the necessary courage, the lady at last determined that she must propose to him herself, and she did so in a way that was at least original.

She told him she wanted to inform him of the name of the man whom she loved, but Lauzun declined to be told it; 'for,' he said, 'I might not approve of your choice.' So she determined to write it down for him, and to give it herself into his hands. She wrote the words *C'est vous* on a paper, and then sealed it up ready to give to him. Then she discovered it was Friday, and Friday was always her unlucky day. So, though he promised he would not open it till after midnight, the paper was held back till Sunday, when they both met at Mass. 'I took out the paper and showed it him, replacing it sometimes in my pocket, sometimes in my muff. He pressed me exceedingly to give it to him, saying that his heart was beating.'¹ So

¹ *Memoirs of Mademoiselle de Montpensier*, iii. 29, English edition, 1848.

they went on for an hour, and then, at last, she gave it him, bidding him read her letter, which 'was but short,' and to write his reply on the foot of it. But, even so, he would not commit himself. He replied that he knew well she was but playing with him, but nevertheless he was, and would always be, her humble servant.

Evidently the next move also must come from Mademoiselle, for Lauzun was afraid, even if he was willing, to take any forward step. So she sat herself down and wrote a letter to the king, announcing her intention to marry and the fact that her choice had fallen on Lauzun, a man undeniably her inferior in rank, but, at least—it was all she could say in his favour—a servant of the king's and captain of his guards.

Louis at first was rather inclined to allow it to go on, but the queen was less complaisant. In her anger she disclosed the true reason of her opposition. 'At your age,' she said to Mademoiselle, 'you would do better to remain single, and to leave your money to my son d'Anjou.' Indeed, the feeling at Court was prodigious. For a princess of the blood to marry a simple count was a *mésalliance* almost without a precedent. Every one was indignant, not only at the Court but all through Paris, and all the pressure possible was put upon Louis to make him withdraw his permission.

Meanwhile Lauzun lost his chance. He should have been married at once while Louis' permission held good. The ceremony should have taken place that very night, as Mademoiselle wanted and his friends advised; but he held off for a grand wedding with proper ceremonial, and waited just too long.

May be, after all, he did not relish the marriage, in the making of which he had been so much more sought after than the seeker.

When, at last, he made up his mind to a private marriage it was already too late. At 8 p.m. of the night before the king sent for Mademoiselle and told her that the marriage could not proceed. 'Beat me, if you like,' he said; 'there is no mark of indignation which I do not deserve from you, and to which I will not submit.' But on the main point, although he wept as freely as she did, he was quite immovable. She threw herself on her knees at his feet and entreated him rather to take her life than to take her De Lauzun away from her. But all was in vain, and at last she went away in despair, only to give way in her carriage to an attack of nerves,¹ during which she broke the glass of her window. Then she went to bed and stayed there for days, receiving visits of condolence.

The idea of a marriage was given up for the time, but for nearly a year the pair saw each other as frequently as they wished, and all might have gone eventually as both of them desired had it not been for the folly of *le petit homme*. He had discovered the part that Mme. de Montespan had played in getting Louis to forbid the marriage, and he was furious against her. He went about publicly denouncing her, and threatening what he would do. Mme. de Montespan, who had never liked him, though he seems to have had a hold over her in some way or other, became genuinely terrified. She went to the king and begged for a *lettre de cachet*. Only in that way,

¹ 'Je la vis,' writes the Abbé de Choisy, 'comme une furie, échevelée et menaçant des bras le ciel et la terre.'—*Mémoires*, p. 222, ed. 1888.

she said, could such a man be kept from mischief.¹ The letter was granted; d'Artegnan was ordered to arrest Lauzun and to conduct him forthwith to Pignerol; Saint-Mars was warned to prepare quarters for yet another distinguished prisoner, and Mademoiselle was left lamenting the hard fate which condemned her, for the time at least, to a spinster life.

It was in November 1671 that Lauzun was sent to Pignerol. He was lodged in the upper tower in the two rooms under Foucquet, with strong iron bars to his windows, and from the first he proved so intractable a prisoner as to make Saint-Mars' life a burden to him. The only amusement that Lauzun had for six years, during which he was wholly cut off from the outer world, was to bully his gaoler every day when he came to visit him, and to invent ingenious plans for getting out of prison. The thing seemed impossible, so closely was the *donjon* guarded, but at one time Lauzun was within an ace of success. With old nails and broken knives he tunnelled through the stone floor of his prison, made a hole large enough to squeeze himself through, found himself in an empty dungeon underneath, broke the bar of the window and squeezed himself out, let himself down the wall by means of a ladder of towels carefully prepared and hidden, only to find himself at last face to face with the sentinel in the moat below, and to be taken back, ignominiously enough, to the prison he had hoped to quit for ever.

This was the state of affairs in 1678. At that date, after long misgivings, the king had at last con-

¹ It was said at the time that the real cause of Lauzun's incarceration was that the pair had ventured on a secret marriage in defiance of the king. For this there does not seem to be any evidence.

sented, at Saint-Mars' repeated request, to allow 'Eustache Dauger' to act as Foucquet's valet. One condition, however, was rigorously insisted on, both at this time and later on, when Foucquet and Lauzun were allowed a certain intercourse with one another. On no account whatever were Lauzun and 'Dauger' ever to be allowed to meet. If Lauzun were about to be brought to Foucquet's rooms, 'Dauger' must first be withdrawn and locked up in his own cell. Foucquet he might see, and La Rivière, Foucquet's other valet, but no one else on any account whatever; and Lauzun, most of all, was at all hazards to be kept away. The order was obeyed, doubtless, with all the exactness that Saint-Mars invariably exercised, but it is rather amusing to see how useless all his measures really were. For Lauzun all the while was seeing 'Dauger' every day, just as often as he wished, though very likely he never exchanged a word on any private subject with one whom he would have regarded as being only a servant of Foucquet's.

One evening Foucquet was surprised by the sudden appearance in his room of a man whom before he was put in prison he had known as a youth of twenty or so about the Court. This was Lauzun. How he got there does not seem at all clear. Some accounts suggest the chimney, others a hole excavated behind a piece of furniture. In either case it is hard to understand why he was not detected at once. Of the fact of his actual arrival there can be, however, no doubt at all, nor that he had made a hole which afterwards had to be built up with masonry. By this means he could come to visit Foucquet when he pleased.

'There they were, then, both together, and Lauzun began to tell the story of his good and bad fortune to

Foucquet. The poor surintendant opened his ears and eyes wide when he heard this Gascon cadet, whom in old days he had known only too happy in being in the service of the Maréchal de Grammont, telling him how he had been colonel commanding the dragoons, captain of the king's guard, general of an army. Foucquet thought him mad and full of delusions when he went on to explain how he had just missed being *grand-maitre* of the artillery, and of all that happened after that; and this suspicion passed into certainty when Lauzun told of the projected marriage with Mademoiselle, first consented to and then broken off by the king, and of all the property which that avaricious princess had settled upon him. After that they did not get on so well together, for Foucquet thought his brain totally gone, and took all the news which Lauzun told him as nothing better than a madman's dreams.¹

All this passed away after a time, and by degrees Foucquet came to realise that his strange visitor was as sane as himself. He had, indeed, much to tell him of all that had happened in the years that had passed between their respective incarcerations, years during which no whisper from the outside world had been allowed to penetrate to Foucquet's ears. 'How much there was to be told! La Vallière, the unheard of favour which she enjoyed—her children recognised, her duchy, how she was deserted and worse than deserted, as the new favourite, the young Tonnay-Charente, now become Marquise de Montespan, rose into favour, and how furious the Marquis de Montespan was about it; how he himself, Lauzun, had played the Colbert, and carried off, hidden in the folds of his

¹ Saint Simon, *Mémoires*, xix. 179, ed. 1875, Paris.

mantle, the little bastard whom they were going to make the Duke of Maine; and how the fair widow Madame Scarron was bringing up the child. Then, if these intrigues did not suffice the greedy curiosity of Fouquet, what stories could not he tell of the power of the king, how Spain had ceased even to claim the first place in Europe; how Flanders had been seized rather than conquered; how Rome had been humiliated; and how, to turn to internal politics, the great financial crisis had passed away—that crisis which was to overwhelm everybody—already forgotten and hardly felt in the coming of a new wave of unexampled prosperity. Or, again, turning to lighter topics, he could tell of Molière playing Tartuffe, or of La Fontaine, the favourite poet of Madame de Montespan; and Pellisson, the man highest just then in the king's favour; and Colbert, Fouquet's own successor, more rich than Mazarin, marrying his children to dukes and duchesses, superior to Lamoignon, to Pomponne, to La Tellier.¹

So the conversations went on, evening after evening, whenever Lauzun judged it safe and convenient to make the ascent. And, evening after evening, there stood by, listening to all that was said, himself apparently saying nothing, Fouquet's valet, 'Eustache Dauger,' the man without a name, the man whom, whatever else might happen, Lauzun, by special order of the king, was on no account to be allowed to meet!

And all the while Saint-Mars, the most sleepless and vigilant of gaolers, sent week by week the most reassuring reports to Louvois and the king. 'I have received,' writes the Minister to him in return in August 1678, 'your letter of the 20th, in which you tell me that your prisoners are in good health and that

¹ Bradley, *The Great Days of Versailles*.

they have said nothing to you in the conversations you have had with them. I can only praise your exactitude, and recommend you to go on informing me of everything that may happen.' 'Nothing need be changed,' he had written a month or too earlier, 'in the precautions you are taking about your prisoners, which are all that can be desired.'

If Louvois had known a little more, his letters, one may safely say, would have been otherwise expressed. The time was coming, however, when the king, in his good pleasure, was about to lessen the rigours of the confinement of his two principal prisoners. Great indulgences were accorded to them. They might go out and take the air on the battlements so long as they were not both out together, and Saint-Mars himself was with them. Even a newspaper was not forbidden. Foucquet may take in the '*Mercure Galant*.' Lauzun may have a new coat, as the weather (it being close on Christmas, 1678) was growing cold.

Still, in spite of these alleviations, both the prisoners were ill, Lauzun probably to some extent shamming to be worse than he really was. The king determined to make yet more concessions, and to give greater liberty, but before he could venture to do so he thought it necessary first to write privately to Foucquet to find out how much was known of the secret of the man who had been serving as his valet for the last three and a half years. A closed letter was sent to him. Saint-Mars was not to read it, nor was he to read the answer, but to send it on, sealed by Foucquet, to Louvois unopened. The letter was a curious one. It set forth how that the king was anxious to grant to Foucquet other and very considerable privileges. But before doing so there was just one thing he desired to know.

Had the man called 'Eustache Dauge,' who had been assigned to him as a servant, ever spoken before the other valet of 'that on which he had been employed before he came to Pignerol.' To this question the king expects a straight answer, and one that shall be given without any consideration whatever as to any consequences that may result. Only when he knows this can the king settle exactly how he ought to act.

This letter is an important piece of evidence for our main inquiry. Fouquet knows the secret already, for the king does not ask whether 'Dauge' has told it to him. Saint-Mars, however, is still in ignorance, for lest he should learn it he is not to be allowed to see either the letter or its answer. The secret, in its roots at any rate, must go back before 1661, when Fouquet was still Minister of Finance. In 1678, when the king is writing, it is still of the greatest value. The only reason, clearly, why 'Dauge' has been allowed to act as Fouquet's servant is that Fouquet, as Minister, already knew so much that it would not matter much if 'Dauge' told him more. But to all the rest of the world it must still remain a mystery, even to that most discreet of gaolers, M. de Saint-Mars.

Fouquet's answer was duly sent off, but has not come down to us. It must, however, have been reassuring, since greater liberty was at once accorded. Lauzun and Fouquet may see each other just as often as they please, provided always that due care is taken always to withdraw 'Dauge' and lock him up safely in his own cell before Lauzun or anyone else comes to visit Fouquet. Writing materials were supplied to both, leave was granted to Fouquet's wife and daughter to come and see him; even to live with him in the *donjon* and to nurse him when he was sick, and

chosen visitors from the town from time to time were admitted to his rooms. The last days of the surintendant's life were thus brightened by human intercourse as well as by the fervent religion which he had inherited from his mother, and which, obscured in the days of his prosperity, had been his one solace in his long imprisonment.

He did not live long to enjoy his new privileges. He fell ill again, and asked for leave to go to take the waters at Bourbon. The request was under consideration, the king was inclined to grant it, when the news came that it was already too late. Nicolas Foucquet passed away on March 23, 1680, in a sudden attack of apoplexy. Thus sadly, almost tragically, ended a life of vivid contrasts and varied experience.

CHAPTER V

EXILES

WHEN the body of Foucquet had been removed and a thorough cleansing of the rooms he had so long occupied had been commenced, a discovery was made which altogether overwhelmed poor Saint-Mars. It was nothing less than the hole by means of which Lauzun had been in the habit of paying his secret visits to Foucquet's rooms, and which, we may suppose, had not been used for the last year or two, during which time the two had had permission to pay each other visits in the ordinary way. Saint-Mars was too honest, or too prudent, to attempt to hide from Louvois a fact which was known to others beside himself, and which, therefore, would have been bound sooner or later to have been reported to the Minister by some one of his spies. He wrote to tell how he had been outwitted, and at the same time expressed his opinion that in all probability Lauzun was fully acquainted with any secrets Foucquet had, and that he fully thought that La Rivière, Foucquet's other valet, must be acquainted with them too.

Louis was in a difficulty. The liberation of Lauzun was practically settled. 'La grande Mademoiselle' had by no means forgotten her *petit homme*, and was using all her influence to get him released. These

endeavours succeeded about a year later in April 1681, but the king must, even at this date, have felt that the time had nearly come to set him free. If then he had learnt anything he ought not to know it was most important that he should not be able to show his witnesses. 'Dauger' and La Rivière were not people of quality; they, at least, had no rights to speak of in those days of the *ancien régime*; they must be made to disappear, and a way would be found, no doubt, of keeping Lauzun quiet, in case it ever should seem good to restore him once more to liberty.

Louis' resolve was soon taken, and the requisite orders were sent to Saint-Mars in a letter from Louvois, dated April 8, 1680, just a fortnight after Fouquet's death. Both the valets are to be shut up together in a single room, where they can hold no communication with anyone, and Lauzun and everybody else are to be told that they have been set at liberty. From that time, in fact, they are to disappear, and no one is to know that they still exist. 'Dauger' because he knows the secret, La Rivière because 'Dauger' may have told it him, and both because they may know Fouquet's secrets too, and because Lauzun may perhaps at some later date make an evil use of their testimony.

The result of this letter was, no doubt, disastrous for the poor valets. La Rivière went to join 'Dauger' in the lower chamber of the *tour d'en bas*, the room that had been specially got ready in 1669, and which it does not seem he had ever left. He had been let out, no doubt, at certain hours of the day to do his work for Fouquet, but it does not seem likely that he had ever left his own cell at night. Anyhow, be that as it may, he went back to it now, with the alleviation, such

as it was, of a second prisoner to share his solitude. For the last few years he had enjoyed the luxury of a name, even though it was not his own. Now he relapses again into his old condition of namelessness; there was no need for a name now that he had no master to call him by it, and the other valet also finds himself in the same condition. 'Dauger' and 'La Rivière' have ceased to exist—they, according to Saint-Mars, have been set at liberty, and are doubtless far away—only in their place there are two nameless prisoners; no one knowing, save the governor, who they are or whence they came; who are known only to the warders and the garrison as *Messieurs de la tour d'en bas*, 'the gentlemen in the lower tower.' They were not the only prisoners in that tower. Two others had for a long time occupied the upper room, Dubreuil and 'the mad Jacobin.' But lately Dubreuil had complained so bitterly about his companion, that he had been removed and had been put with Mattioli in the upper floor of the other tower, so just at this juncture 'the mad Jacobin' was alone in the room above. The others were together underneath, absolutely separated from their fellows. Their spiritual privileges, to avoid any whisper of their existence reaching the world outside, were cut down as rigidly as their material liberty. 'It will suffice,' writes Louvois, 'to confess once in the year those who are living in the *tour d'en bas*.' It is in the same letter in which the last direction is contained—a letter written on July 10, 1680, when the two *miserables* had been already two months under these new conditions, that Louvois alludes to something mysterious on the part of 'Dauger.' 'Tell me,' he says, 'how was it possible for the man called Eustache to do what you say he has done? How did

he get the necessary drugs (*les drogues nécessaires*)? I cannot suppose that you supplied them to him.'

What was this mysterious action, performed under conditions so difficult, and yet sufficiently important to be reported to the Minister of the king? Two solutions have been offered. The first is that of M. Iung, who thinks that Foucquet died of poison administered by 'Dauger,' and that Saint-Mars had found it out. M. Iung sees poison and poisoners everywhere. What possible object could there have been on 'Dauger's' part to make him poison the master whose service was his one hope of getting a few hours of quasi-liberty and human companionship? Nor does it seem quite likely that if a servant already in prison had actually poisoned his master that Louvois would have let the act pass unnoticed, and apparently without reprimand. For such a crime in that age 'Eustache Dauger' would have been boiled alive.

The second solution is that offered by M. Lair. He thinks that Foucquet had taught 'Dauger' to distil, an art he was fond of practising, and that 'Dauger' had done as his master used to do when he found time pass wearily in the *tour d'en bas*. But, then, would Saint-Mars have thought it worth while to report so trifling a matter to Louvois, or would Louvois have troubled to make further inquiries on the subject? To the present writer, at least, neither of these solutions seems satisfactory, although it may not be easy to offer any third solution which shall adequately fit the conditions.

Whether it was connected with this act of 'Dauger's' is uncertain, but in his next letter Saint-Mars makes a suggestion. May he put Mattioli with 'the mad Jacobin,' in the room above these other

prisoners? Louvois' answer was in the affirmative. He has asked the king, and the king approves. He may do as he has suggested, and may put Mattioli with the mad Jacobin, for the reason which, apparently, has also been suggested by him, *pour éviter l'entretien de deux aumoniers*—‘to save keeping two chaplains’—a reason to which, considering the arrangements of the prison, it is not easy to give an intelligible meaning. Here, however, an alternative interpretation will be suggested at a later stage of the story.

Mattioli, after eight months of imprisonment, had shown signs of madness or had feigned them. Saint-Mars' methods were not favourable to sanity; one after another prisoners lost their wits under his charge, but in several cases there was a certain amount of shamming, or perhaps of hysteria, in the business, and the sight of a whip, Saint-Mars had found, would often work a cure. Mattioli, still rather inclined to insanity, though better than he had been a few months before, had now been in prison for fifteen months, when they put him to live with the Jacobin or Dominican friar, who was even more demented than himself.

What then happened was duly reported to Louvois in Saint-Mars' next letter. Mattioli, who thought the Jacobin was there as a spy upon his actions, had marched up and down the room with long steps, his cloak over his face, saying that he would show them he was no dupe, but that he knew more than he cared to tell. The Jacobin meanwhile sat on his bed, his elbows on his knees and his head in his hands, not saying a word or listening to what the other was saying, but following him always with his eyes. At last, wearied out, both went to bed, and then Mattioli's idea that this was a spy was quickly dismissed when, in the

middle of the night, the Jacobin got out of bed, and, just as he was, without clothing, preached, till he could preach no more, a rigmarole without rhyme or reason. Saint-Mars and his lieutenant, enjoying the scene, watched it all through a hole at the top of the door. Such were the ways of a State prison in the days of Louis Quatorze.

Saint-Mars had long been anxious to be removed from Pignerol. The divided command between the *donjon*, where he was supreme, and the rest of the place, which was under M. d'Herleville, made constant friction, and he would prefer a place where he could be alone. He had made application for more than one appointment, until at last Louvois had given him a strong hint that it was better to be patient, and that he himself would see that his interests did not suffer. Now, in 1681, with Foucquet dead and Lauzun freed, there was little reason for keeping him at Pignerol, and accordingly, in May of that year, just a month after Lauzun had left his prison, he received his appointment to a new place—the governorship of the fortress of Exiles, an isolated stronghold among the mountains of Dauphiné, not far from Susa, and some thirty miles from Pignerol.

Hither, according to the original plan, he was to betake himself at once, with such of his prisoners as the king might choose, so soon only as the necessary repairs were completed. A few weeks later, however, he received fresh orders, to drag out the time of these repairs as long as possible, so as to make an excuse for not leaving Pignerol for a time, as recent developments had made his presence there still desirable.

The fact was that there was again a plot on foot to obtain Casale. Mattioli was safe in Pignerol, and

could not give the affair away again. Catinat was once more charged with the execution of the design, and came to Pignerol in August. Lest, however, the mere fact of his being there should get abroad and so awake suspicions, he entered Pignerol, not as a general in command, but as a pretended prisoner. When he was going, a month later, to take possession of Casale, Louvois wrote to Saint-Mars a letter which is worth studying, as an example of the veiled way in which so many of these dispatches are written—plain enough to the person receiving them, but deliberately intended to mislead any chance reader. ‘The king has no objection,’ he wrote, ‘to your going to visit the last prisoner you have received, when he has left you to go to his new prison.’ The ‘last prisoner’ is Catinat, passing as a prisoner under the name of de Richemont, and his ‘new prison’ is Casale, to the governorship of which he had been appointed and to which he was on the point of going. This mysterious new prisoner of 1681 is the person in whom M. Loiseleur found ‘the man in the mask’! His mistake was pointed out by M. Topin.

This business of Casale delayed Saint-Mars for some little time. He did not actually leave Pignerol until October. Long before that, however, it had been settled that quarters at his new command need be prepared only for two of the five prisoners he then had in his hands. The two whom the king judged to be of such importance that they must not pass into other hands than his, were ‘the two of the *tour d’en bas*,’ the nameless ones whose former existence had been blotted out, ‘Eustache Dauger’ and La Rivière.

It is at this point that most of the various systems which claim to trace out the identity of the Man in the Iron Mask diverge one from another. Since it is

certain from Du Jonca's journal that the masked prisoner was with Saint-Mars at Pignerol, it follows that he must be one of the five prisoners who were in his hands when he left that fortress, and probably one of the two who accompanied him to Exiles. But these two are never named, either then or in all the years which followed. They are simply and invariably 'the prisoners of the tower.' In later years, when one of them is dead, the survivor is always spoken of in some similar manner. He is 'your prisoner of twenty years,' 'your prisoner of long standing' (*votre ancien prisonnier*), 'the prisoner of long standing' (*l'ancien prisonnier*), 'the prisoner from Provence,' and so forth, whenever the presence of the prisoner makes some such designation necessary. Otherwise he is simply 'my prisoner.' Never once, to the end of his life, two-and-twenty years afterwards, is he ever again given a name in the official correspondence. It becomes, therefore, of the greatest importance that we should go carefully and circumspectly at this portion of the story, as a mistake made here will vitiate the whole argument.

The older school of writers, Roux-Fazillac, Delort, and others, knowing that Mattioli was placed with the mad Jacobin in the upper chamber of the *tour d'en bas* in September 1680, and not remembering or caring to inquire where it was that 'Dauger' and La Rivière were lodged, took it for granted that 'the prisoners of the lower tower' in May 1681, could only be Mattioli and the Jacobin. They supposed the Jacobin to have died in 1694 at Exiles, and so proved clearly and to their own satisfaction that Mattioli was the man in question. This theory, however, otherwise so complete and satisfactory, was utterly overthrown

by the publication of a letter, till then unknown, written by Saint-Mars to d'Estrades, the Ambassador of France at Turin, and dated June 25, 1681. He tells him of his appointment to Exiles, and that he is to have in charge at that fortress 'two crows (*merles*) whom I have here, who have no other name than "*Messieurs de la tour d'en bas*." *Mattioli will stay here with two other prisoners.*'

Since it was now impossible to make Mattioli one of the two who went to Exiles, the next set of writers fix their attention on the Jacobin. He, at least, was one of those in the *tour d'en bas*, and there was no proof that he had not gone to Exiles. Clearly Mattioli had found him unbearable, just as Dubreuil had done before, and had been moved away, perhaps lest he, too, should be infected with the same madness. Someone else, unrecorded, must have come to sleep there in his place, and he must be the Man in the Mask.

M. Loiseleur found this imaginary companion in the mysterious prisoner of 1681, whom he imagined Catinat had arrested and brought there. But M. Topin at once showed that there was no such prisoner, and that it really was no other than Catinat himself—pretending to be a prisoner to avoid being talked about.

M. Iung fixed on the prisoner brought in 1674, the details of whose arrest are no doubt sufficiently startling. He fitted him with a name, brought him to Pignerol (this point, however, he failed to prove), put him in imagination with the mad Jacobin in the *tour d'en bas*, and from that point onward followed the lines of his predecessors.

MM. Burgand and Bazeris succeeded in reading the secret despatches of Louis. They found out that the prisoner of 1674 was another man, not the one

that M. Iung had chosen. Unfortunately, so soon as they had published his name, the proofs were published that he had been set at liberty within the year.

M. Topin and M. Funck-Brentano fall back on Mattioli. They seize on the word *merles* employed by Saint-Mars in his letter to d'Estrades. This contemptuous word, they say, shows that the prisoners actually taken to Exiles were of little consequence. It is not there that we shall find the Mask. Mattioli after all came back to Saint-Mars, after thirteen more years, at Sainte-Marguerite. It follows that he must be the Man in the Mask, and the meaning of the phrase *mon ancien prisonnier* is simply, and quite grammatically, 'the prisoner whom I had once before and who has now returned to me.' They omit to say how they propose to explain the phrase *l'ancien prisonnier* in the mouth, say, of Du Jonca. The other reasons why this solution cannot be accepted have been already given.

To the present writer, though he would speak with diffidence when discussing with Frenchmen the meaning of a French word, it does not seem clearly proved that in the seventeenth century the word *merles* necessarily denotes contempt. Looking to the derivation, it comes from *merula*, a solitary, and that seems to give a satisfactory meaning. In the prisons of France there were prisoners of two kinds. The more usual system was one of enforced detention, but nothing more. These prisoners could meet and talk as much as they pleased, though they could not leave their prison. But there were a few doomed to solitary confinement and forbidden all intercourse with their fellow men. These and these only were the original *merles*, and in using the word Saint-Mars does not denote contempt, but only indicates to d'Estrades that it was to this class

that they belonged. He was going to Exiles with two *solitaires*.¹

The move was actually made about the middle of September 1681, and in a somewhat mysterious manner. Without giving any notice whatever to the commandant at Pignerol, who yet, in a sense, was his superior officer, Saint-Mars with his two prisoners set out at dead of night, passing through the small gateway which led from the *donjon* directly outside the fortifications. With him there went also his Free Company, now reduced to two lieutenants, Beaujoly and La Prade, and forty-seven men, since these two prisoners at Exiles would need less guarding than did Foucquet and Lauzun and the others at Pignerol. D'Herleville wrote to Louvois to complain of this discourtesy, but was answered in return that Saint-Mars had his own orders, and had acted on them. In this way the transfer of the prisoners was made almost without anyone being aware of it. Exiles must have been reached in the morning of the following day, when people at Pignerol were only just becoming aware that anything had happened.

Exiles, well known nowadays to travellers by the Mont Cenis railway, was then as lonely and isolated a spot as could well be found anywhere. The fortress stood high up in the hills, at the end of a number of mountain routes, closing a defile which led from Briançon to Turin. The village was insignificant and far away. There was an ancient tower, said to have been built by the Romans, and a number of more modern buildings. Saint-Mars and the Free Company

¹ If this explanation be thought far fetched, *merles*, after all, need mean no more than caged bird. Blackbirds are constantly so kept in France. The main point is that no *contempt* is necessarily implied.

had their lodgings in these, and the tower was given up to the use of the prisoners. It was from his dwelling in this tower that our prisoner once more found a name, and both here and at Sainte-Marguerite came to be known as 'M. Latour.'

The dulness and monotony of life in this spot must have been almost insupportable, but Saint-Mars was well paid for the privations he was suffering. To the prisoners it cannot have mattered much where they were. Saint-Mars at this time was receiving 6,000 francs as commandant, 1,800 francs as sub-lieutenant of the Mousquetaires, 4,800 francs for the charge of the forts of Pérouse and of l'Ecluse—besides rooms, lights, fire, fodder, and other allowances, and fifteen francs a day for the maintenance of each of his prisoners. To be governor of a State prison was in those days a sure way of amassing a fortune.

The winter went by without the occurrence of any notable event. One or other of his prisoners, Saint-Mars writes to Louvois on December 4, was always ill, and between them they kept his hands full, but nothing else came to break the tedious monotony. A doctor came up to visit the prisoners from a neighbouring town, and leave was given to send for the parish curé to confess them once a year at Easter time. Saint-Mars also asks for and obtains leave to buy them fresh winter clothes, but is warned against extravagance. 'Clothes,' writes the Minister, 'for people of this kind ought to last three or four years at the least.'

This letter shows that neither of the prisoners was, in Louvois' opinion, a person of any importance so far as his worldly position was concerned, but, nevertheless, almost immediately after, something seems to

have occurred to enhance the importance of the secret 'Dauger' was supposed to hold. Louvois writes again in March 1682, as if he had not already insisted sufficiently upon the point, to remind Saint-Mars, on behalf of the king himself, of the absolute necessity that these two prisoners should have no intercourse with any person whatever, and that they should not be allowed to speak to anyone, not only from outside, but even from among their guards. Mr. Lang says that they were now separated the one from the other and placed in solitary confinement. Of this, however, there is no trace. The old precautions were adhered to without change, but more rigorously than ever.

Saint-Mars replied to this letter from Louvois by a long and interesting dispatch from which we learn the details of the life at Exiles. Nothing, he says, can exceed the care and anxiety with which the guard has been carried out. It has varied nothing from the routine adopted in the old days with MM. Foucquet and Lauzun. The prisoners, it is true, can hear the voices of those who pass along the road under the tower, but they cannot make themselves heard in return; they can see people on the hills by which the fort is surrounded, but they themselves cannot be seen, because of the bars which close their windows. Two sentinels are posted night and day at the foot of the tower, each of them commanding from his beat the prisoners' window. They had orders to prevent all attempts at communication, should any be made, and also to prevent any loitering on the road or the hills in the neighbourhood of the fortress. His own rooms, too, adjoined the tower, and from his windows he commanded both the window of the prisoners and also

the two sentinels, so that any breach of discipline would be at once detected.

Inside the tower a piece of their chamber had been portioned off to serve as a chapel, so that the priest who said Mass for them could not see them. The servants, too, were not permitted to enter the room. They brought the food to the door and the lieutenant then carried it in. No one spoke to them except himself—the lieutenant just mentioned, M. Vignerot the confessor, and a doctor who came from Pragelas, eighteen miles away. These last saw the prisoners only in Saint-Mars' presence. As for the linen and so forth, the same precautions were taken to avoid any message being sent out as had been customary with Fouquet and Lauzun. All such soiled linen was placed to soak in the tower itself, and only after it had undergone this process and had been inspected by Saint-Mars' lieutenant, was it allowed to be carried away and washed.

These precautions seemed satisfactory to Louvois and the king, and nothing further was directed. Saint-Mars was, however, warned that no other lieutenant except the one who had already been permitted to do so was for the future to be allowed to visit them in their prison or to speak to them. This lieutenant seems to have been La Prade. Beaujoly, the other lieutenant, does not seem to have had much to do with the prisoners at any time. Slowly the years passed away. There are letters at not infrequent intervals from Louvois asking for news of the prisoners. Once or twice Saint-Mars is granted a certain leave of absence, so long as due precautions are taken for their safety while he is away. They could be left quite safely under the care of La Prade, a man as regular

and scrupulous as Saint-Mars himself, and who was in all things at this time his *alter ego*.

The prisoners, too, were of a very different type from those he had had in the past. If Foucquet was 'a lamb' compared to Lauzun, one wonders what word could be used to express prisoners so admirable, from a gaoler's point of view, as were 'the two of the *tour d'en bas*.' Of 'Dauger' Saint-Mars had written in December 1673, 'He says nothing, he lives content, like a man wholly resigned to the will of God and of the king.' So in the same way now, in 1685, twelve years afterwards, he writes, 'My prisoners are always ill and under treatment, but for the rest they are in great tranquillity.'

In the case of one of the two this illness became serious. La Rivière (we know that it was he because he wanted to make his will and dispose of the money he had earned as Foucquet's valet, while 'Dauger' had no money to leave) now developed dropsical symptoms. Leave was therefore given to let him be confessed and receive the sacraments at any time, should his malady reach the point of actual danger. On January 5, 1687, Saint-Mars writes to announce that he is dead.

This letter from Saint-Mars crossed another written by Louvois on the 8th to announce to him that the king had been pleased to appoint him to yet another government, the Iles Sainte-Marguerite and Honorat, in the bay of Cannes on the southern coast, a welcome change indeed after the long rigours of Exiles. He was to go down at once to see the spot, and to report what changes would be necessary to allow of the safe keeping of the two prisoners (Louvois had not yet heard that one was already dead), both of whom it was

the king's will should be taken there with him when he took up his charge.

Saint-Mars writes at once to express his gratitude for the promotion. He will go forthwith to Sainte-Marguerite to make the required survey. At the same time, since the snow lies deep on the direct route he would be glad if he might have leave to go round by Turin, paying his respects to the Duke of Savoy as he passed through his capital. Louvois might trust him to do all that was necessary for the safe keeping of his prisoner—since now there was only one. He suggests that, though a litter did well enough for his transference over the short distance from Pignerol to Exiles, a chair with wheels, and covered over with waxed cloth, would be better for this longer journey. Litters often break down, and in this way his face might be seen. Both these requests were approved by Louvois, and the whole responsibility of preparing a safe prison at the new command, and of conveying the prisoner thither with all due secrecy and security, was left absolutely to Saint-Mars.

Early in February Saint-Mars started off to view his new command. Before he went, however, he made all arrangements for the safe keeping of the prisoner, and, in particular, gave orders that La Prade, the lieutenant he left in command, was on no account to speak to him. This had been always the rule, he says, in spite of the quasi-permission given by Louvois in favour of this particular lieutenant in 1682. Arrived at the Isles he made a plan, which he estimated would cost 5,000 francs to execute, for the building of a new and safe prison for the man who was in his charge. Then he fell ill of fever and kept his bed for the next twenty days, so that he was unable to get back to

Exiles. He writes, however, on March 23, to say that he is cured, thanks to the large doses of quinine he has taken, and once more returns to the anxious question of the prisoner's journey. He shall not hear Mass on the way, that would be dangerous. When, however, he arrives at Sainte-Marguerite he will have a chapel adjoining his cell, so there will then be no difficulty on that score. He proposes to move the prisoner at once, although his new prison will not be ready. If, however, he may turn out from his cell the one prisoner already in the island, the *Sieur de Chézut*, and put his own prisoner there for a time in his stead, he thinks he will be safe enough.

On April 30 the transfer was over, and the prisoner safely lodged at Sainte-Marguerite. The plan of a sedan chair tightly closed in with waxed cloth was that which was eventually fixed on for his conveyance, and eight porters had been hired to carry him from Savoy down to Provence. They had been obliged to push on and make great speed, for the poor prisoner was half dead for want of air, and the journey had in consequence been completed in the excellent time of twelve days. Except for this unfortunate want of air and the suffering which it had caused, everything had gone admirably. 'I can assure you, Monseigneur,' writes Saint-Mars, 'that no single person has set eyes upon him, and that the care with which I watched over him on the road was such as to set everyone trying to discover who my prisoner could possibly be.'

His bed and other effects had been left behind at Exiles. They were so old and broken that they were not worth bringing so far, and, in fact, the whole lot, when sold, had only fetched the sum of thirteen crowns. At Sainte-Marguerite, therefore, a new outfit had been

supplied. At the end of the year Saint-Mars sends in the bill for it. He sends the total only, for he dare not venture to send the items, lest from them 'some one might be able to penetrate into other things than what they at present believe.' Here, again, is a fresh and seemingly a needless piece of mystery. The result of it all was that public curiosity was aroused, and, as Saint-Mars reports in the same letter, January 8, 1688, in all the country round men were saying that his prisoner was either M. de Beaufort (the Duc de Beaufort who had been killed in Candia in 1669, and whose body was never found), or else 'a son of the late Cromwell.' Already, as long before at Pignerol, and to a much greater extent at the Bastille and after his death, the extraordinary precautions of which our prisoner was the constant subject, are the cause of myths and legends which cluster round his name. The apparent glee with which Saint-Mars records the fact suggests that here again we have to deal with 'fairy tales,' *contes jaunes*, to use his own expression, which owed their origin only to himself and his 'short way' with troublesome inquirers.

CHAPTER VI

SAINTE-MARGUERITE AND THE BASTILLE

IT must, indeed, have been a pleasant change for Saint-Mars and for his prisoner, in spite of all that the latter had suffered on the road, when they found themselves duly installed at the Island of Sainte-Marguerite in the warm air and brilliant sunshine of a Riviera spring, instead of the cold blackness which they had left behind at Exiles. Every one who has been to the Riviera knows the Isles de Lérins, which make so attractive a feature in the view from the neighbourhood of Cannes. Everything remains more or less as it was in those days, and to pay a visit to the Monastery of St. Honorat and to 'the Prison of the Iron Mask,' is an excursion which few of those who spend the winter at Cannes ever omit to make.

A recent French writer has waxed eloquent on the beauties of its situation. 'Where is the traveller,' he writes, 'who as he follows the gracious bends of the railway to Nice, from La Napoule to the Golfe Ionan, has failed to admire the charming situation of the Isles de Lérins, at the foot of the heights of the Maures, and of the Croisette Point? Who has not stood in wonder as he gazed on the marvellous belt of villages and country houses which can be seen from the royal fortress. It might pass for a scene in opéra

comique — a splendid horizon cut into by groves of orange trees, fields of flowers, and by wild forests which stretch right up to Grasse, that town of perfumes, and to the mountains which rise above it. And yet it was here, in the midst of all these enchantments, on the northern side of the largest of these islands, that there rose up, silent and sad, the old fortress of Richelieu, now ruled so anxiously by M. de Saint-Mars.’¹

This fortress, which is still partly standing, had been built by Richelieu in 1633, when the islands were first recovered from the Spaniards. When Saint-Mars was appointed there was no prison, properly so-called. He it was who built the prisons, expressly for the purpose of receiving ‘the Iron Mask’ when he came here in 1687.

Saint-Mars seems to have built two cells only at this time. They were destined, we may suppose, for the two prisoners under his charge, the one whom he had brought from Exiles and the one whom he took over on entering his command. At a later period others were sent to him, and fresh accommodation, we may suppose, was provided. His letter, however, to Louvois (January 8, 1688) is quite clear in speaking of *two* new prisons which he had built. It is precisely the second cell from the end, the outermost of the two constructed at this moment, that tradition still points out as having been for so long the home of the Masked Prisoner.

Saint-Mars himself was well pleased with his work. ‘The cells,’ he wrote to Louvois, ‘are large, fine, and light, and for their goodness I do not think you could find stronger or more secure in all Europe, especially as regards the carrying of news either from near or

¹ Iung, *La vérité sur le masque de fer*, p. 166.

far—a thing which was not to be found in any of the places in which I had the charge of the late M. Foucquet after his arrest.

An inspection of the cell as it is to-day fully bears out Saint-Mars report. The special safety of the place arises from the fact that it is built on the edge of the cliff, which falls straight away to the water. The door of the cell, 'a venerable nail-studded and most dungeon-like door,' may be the original; the room is lofty, with a vaulted roof, and well lighted, with a wide and high window, 'with a most appalling apparatus of cross-bars, four rows originally, of which three still remain.'

The garrison of the fortress consisted of two companies of infantry, besides Saint-Mars' own Free Company. La Prade was second in command, and held the post of king's lieutenant. M. de Dampierre, who had been there for some years, and who had been actually in temporary command for two years before Saint-Mars came, was now third—as 'major' of the fortress. The guard of the prisoners was here, as before, exclusively committed to the Free Company, whose officers, under Saint-Mars, were now De Formanoir, Beaujoly, and Rosarges. De Formanoir was the Governor's nephew, and Rosarges, who had been with him for many years, was now promoted from the ranks.

Before 1690 the other prisoner, M. de Chézut, was either dead or discharged, for in February of that year Louvois writes to Saint-Mars to warn him of the arrival of another prisoner of a novel kind, a Protestant minister of the name of Cardel, who on arrival is to be placed 'in the prison of M. de Chézut'—that is, no doubt, in the other one of the two special vaulted

prisons which Saint-Mars has caused to be built. This man was the first of a series of similar prisoners, but was sent to Sainte-Marguerite, not for his religion, but because he was accused of planning an attempt against the king's life. He was to be imprisoned *pendant toute sa vie*, and his maintenance was fixed at fifteen sous a day. For Saint-Mars' old prisoner, M. Latour as they now called him, three francs a day were being allowed, so he was on a much better footing now than were any of the rest.

The next prisoners who arrived were two more ministers named respectively Salves and Lestang, and both on life sentences. They came in January 1690, and the directions were very clear that no one was to speak to them or hold any communication with them, and that they were to be kept with the utmost security. The difficulty was that there were no more prison cells available in which to keep them, and Saint-Mars writes therefore to ask permission to build new prisons, leave for which was granted in a letter from Louvois of March 10, 1692. At this time, then, it seems to be clear that the remaining cells were constructed, four on the ground floor in continuation of the others, and two above the ones already built, the vaulted roof allowing this to be easily done. The new cells do not seem to have been vaulted, and so far they were less strong than the first two, as well as less expensive.

These Protestant ministers have no immediate connection with the main subject except that their escapades gave rise to some of the stories traditionally told about the masked prisoner and collected by Voltaire on the spot in the middle of the next century. For the people of the island the only prisoner of interest was the unknown man about whom so much mystery was

made, and who had come from Exiles with Saint-Mars. Everything, therefore, which happened in connection with the prison was put down to his credit, not without growing considerably in the course of the process. We have, however, the actual reports of the events made by Saint-Mars to Louvois at the moment when each of them occurred—and we can easily recognise how it was that the pretty stories of the ‘silver plate’ and of ‘the fine linen on which the prisoner had written’ came to be spread abroad.

For these new prisoners were of a very different mould from the quiet, wholly resigned, Man of the Mask, ‘M. Latour.’ Their one object was, since they saw no hope of escaping, to make their sufferings known to the world outside. Saint-Mars’ letters are full of complaints. Cardel is the first offender. ‘He sings psalms night and day, at the top of his voice, with the express purpose of letting people know who and what he is. I told him again and again to stop doing it under pain of a thorough flogging, which at last I had to give him, as also to his comrade, who is called Salves, and who has scribbling on the brain, and writes nonsense on his tin vessel and on his linen to tell people that he has been shut up unjustly for no other reason than the purity of his faith.’ Saint-Mars got a stern rebuke, for having ventured to flog his prisoners, from Pontchartrain, under whose authority, as well as that of Louvois, he had now come. Louvois had given him permission to do so, but Seigneley and Pontchartrain would have none of it. ‘His Majesty has ordered me to write that he is most astonished at what you have ventured to do without order,’ writes Seigneley, ‘and he desires that you will for the future use no harsh measures of that kind.’ ‘These folk have very strong

prejudices (*sont très-opiniâtres*),' writes Pontchartrain a little later, 'and should be treated with all the humanity you can give them.'¹

More Protestant ministers came in 1692 and in 1693, each to be placed in a separate cell and kept in solitary confinement. The first was Malzac, who was suffering already from a terrible complaint, and seems to have died within the year. The second, Girard, and the third, whose name is not known, also seem to have made but a short stay, for in 1693 (March 3) there are only the original three at the Isle, and Barbezieux (Louvois' son and successor) writes to tell Saint-Mars that he need not for the future speak of them by their names, but only as the Songster, the Scribbler, and the Last-one-come, by which names he will be able to recognise them. But a new lot of prisoners were now coming from another place to fill the four cells which were still unoccupied, out of the eight at Saint-Mars' disposal.

The reason of this change was that Pignerol was no longer a safe place for a State prison. It will be remembered that Mattioli and two other prisoners had been left there in 1681 under the charge of Villebois, one of Saint-Mars' lieutenants, who had the actual command of the *donjon* and the citadel, though Saint-Mars himself still retained some sort of nominal superiority over him. In 1691 Villebois fell ill, and leave was granted to Saint-Mars to make an exchange between his lieutenants, sending La Prade to command at the *donjon* of Pignerol and taking Villebois instead to the milder climate of Sainte-Marguerite. Villebois, however, died before he could take advantage of this arrangement, and La Prade was sent to take his place

¹ Iung, p. 268.

at Pignerol. De Formanoir succeeded La Prade at Sainte-Marguerite, becoming, as Saint-Mars long before had described the lieutenant in special charge of his prisoners, 'a veritable fixture (*cul de plomb*), always kept here by his work, like the bolts on my prisoners' doors.'¹

The fortunes of the French arms had been less propitious of late years, and the cession of Casale, from which so much had been hoped, had only resulted in uniting the other powers of Italy against the French. Already the troops of Victor Amadeo, the Duke of Savoy, were besieging Pignerol, and the fall of the place, if not imminent, was always possible. Evidently it was high time that the prisoners, and especially Mattioli, should be removed to safer quarters.

On March 20, 1694, Barbezieux wrote to Saint-Mars to tell him that three new prisoners were coming, and asking whether he had sufficient room to receive them. One of the new ones who is coming is of more consequence than the prisoners already at the Island, and must therefore be given the safest place. This is clearly Mattioli, whom we know still to have been at Pignerol as late as the previous December, and for him accordingly the second of the two original prisons of Saint-Mars, the twin to that occupied by 'M. Latour,' will have been prepared.

The hardships of the siege had caused a great deal of sickness among the prisoners at Pignerol. Mattioli and his servant had both been ill and in bed, and through this the discovery had been made that they had been writing messages on the pockets of their clothes, doubtless in the hope of somehow getting them conveyed to their friends outside. One of the

¹ Letter from Saint-Mars, February 17, 1673.

prisoners had actually died, and, since La Prade did not know his name, Barbezieux had written for information to Saint-Mars. He was the oldest (*le plus ancien*) of the prisoners, and must have been 'the mad Jacobin,' whose name was never mentioned in the despatches, and still remains uncertain. Saint-Mars sent it in cypher to the Minister, but his letter has been destroyed.

There remained, at this time, of the original prisoners whom Saint-Mars had known only Mattioli and Dubreuil, with the addition of Mattioli's man, who is never counted as a prisoner in the full sense. Others had come and gone since Saint-Mars' departure, but only one had remained in captivity, a certain De Herse, a man of no great importance, the details of whose life, so far as they are known to us, may be read in Iung. These three, Mattioli, Dubreuil, and De Herse, with Mattioli's valet, are the prisoners who were now to be transferred to Sainte-Marguerite.

Barbezieux wrote to La Prade the same day that he wrote to Saint-Mars. He ordered him to move the three prisoners one by one, since he had no soldiers under his own command to form a competent guard. Saint-Mars would send two sergeants to help him, and when they had brought one prisoner across safely, the party was to return to fetch another. Arrangements were to be made meanwhile for the safe-keeping of the ones left behind.

This cumbrous arrangement was afterwards changed. An escort was provided by the Maréchal de Tessy, who was in command of the French army at the siege, and four prisoners—doubtless the three already mentioned and the valet—were duly taken in a single party and placed in Saint-Mars' charge. The journey, however,

seems to have been too much for Mattioli's strength. He had been ill, as we have seen, three months before, and no doubt his constitution had not improved in the course of his captivity of fifteen years. Whether he died on the way or immediately after his arrival we cannot tell. No record of his death has yet been found. It was announced, apparently, in the next letter of Saint-Mars to Barbezieux, which was written on April 29, but has not been preserved. In it he asked what he was to do with the valet now his master was dead. Should he put him where his master would have been, in 'the vaulted prison,' the safest place in the island, and reserved for the most important prisoner? To this question Barbezieux answered in the affirmative, and he was placed accordingly next to the 'Iron Mask.' Tradition in the island still tells that this cell was occupied by the Mask's servant, and that he remained behind at Sainte-Marguerite, and died there some eight years later. Whether or not his services were actually given to the Masked Man there is no authentic evidence.

In any case it seems clear that, compared to what it had been at Exiles and at Pignerol, the life of our mysterious prisoner was a good deal alleviated at Sainte-Marguerite. The mask, which now for the first time makes its appearance, was itself an indulgence, and not, as has so often been represented, an added torture. It was only a light construction of black velvet, with no iron of any kind about it, which could be put on when permission was given to go outside the cell, and which effectually prevented any possibility of his being recognised. At Pignerol, and apparently at Exiles, he had never been allowed to go outside his cell at all, except indeed when the exigen-

cies of M. Foucquet's service required his presence. But at the Island, and apparently also at the Bastille, tradition seems to be clear that he was, sometimes at any rate, allowed outside on condition that he wore the mask. From 1688 onwards he seems to have been treated on a different footing from before, whether this is due only to his own good behaviour for so long a period or to some other cause. The constant tradition of the favour, and even deference, shown to him by the governor in these later years—a tradition existing alike at Sainte-Marguerite and at the Bastille—must have some basis in fact, and does not seem to be simply the result of the fables published by Voltaire. At Palteau, on the way to the Bastille, Saint-Mars sits down to dinner *vis-à-vis* with his prisoner; no one else, not even his own nephew and lieutenant, being allowed to join the party. This surely denotes a change from the time when the prisoner was known only as 'Eustache Dauger,' who need not have much preparation made for him since he is 'only a servant.'

The daily life at Sainte-Marguerite was much the same in most respects as at Exiles and Pignerol. We have a full account of it given us by Saint-Mars in a long dispatch to Barbezieux, who had manifested some curiosity upon the point. 'You bid me tell you,' he writes, 'what the practice is when I am ill or absent, with reference to the visits and precautions which are made daily for the prisoners who are in my charge.'

'My two lieutenants serve their food at the regular hours, just as they have seen me do it, and as I still often do when I am well. This is the way it is done, monseigneur. My senior lieutenant [de Formanoir] takes the keys of the prison of my old prisoner [*mon ancien prisonnier*], with whom we begin; he opens the

three doors and enters into the room of the prisoner, who politely hands him the plates and dishes, laid one on another, and the lieutenant has only to go through two doors [into the corridor] to give them to one of my sergeants, who places them on a table two steps away, where my second lieutenant [Rosarges] is standing. It is his duty to examine everything that comes into or goes out of the prison, and to see that nothing has been written on the vessels. After the prisoner has been given all he needs, an examination is made in and behind the bed, and then of the gratings of the windows, and so on all through the room, and very often on himself also.

‘After the prisoner has been asked very politely whether he wants anything, the doors are locked up again, and they go on to do the same for the other prisoners.

‘The linen for the table is changed twice a week, as also are the shirts and linen which they wear, a strict account being kept as they are handed in and taken back.

‘One can easily be caught in dealing with the linen which comes in and out for the use of prisoners of position. I have known them try to bribe the laundress, and then she has come and told me all about it; so that after a time I had all the linen put in soak when it left the room, and when it was clean and half dry the laundress used to come and fetch it away in the presence of one of my lieutenants, who used to put the baskets into a chest until such time as they were handed over to the prisoners’ servants. In candles, too, there is much to distrust. I have found some which had paper where the wicks ought to be when I broke them or used them. I had to send and buy them at Turin, at shops

which had not been tampered with. It is very dangerous also to let ribbon pass out of a prisoner's room. He writes on it, as on linen, without anyone being able to see it.

'The late M. Foucquet used to make excellent paper, on which I used to let him write, and then I used to go at night and take it from a little pocket he had made at the bottom of his breeches, and then send it on to your late father.

'One more precaution we take is to visit the prisoners both in the day and at night at times which are not regulated, and then one often finds that they have been writing things no one can read on their dirty linen, as you have seen by the examples I have had the honour to send you.'

Barbezieux found nothing to add to these precautions and expressed himself well satisfied.

This letter was written in 1696, and by that time Saint-Mars' stay at Sainte-Marguerite was already drawing to a close. Two years later, on June 15, 1698, Barbezieux wrote to tell him that the king had appointed him governor of the Bastille, and that he was to come up, as soon as he heard again, to take possession of his new command, bringing with him 'in all possible security' the prisoner who had been so long in his charge. On July 19 the start was made, a notice having been sent on beforehand to M. du Jonca, the king's lieutenant commanding for the moment at the Bastille, to have suitable quarters prepared and furnished for the prisoner to go into on his arrival in Paris.

There is one noteworthy difference in the directions given for the care of the prisoner on the way. Hitherto

the chief anxiety has been that he should not be able to speak to anyone for fear he should tell to any the great secret of 'the business on which he had been employed before ever he came to Pignerol.' This time the sole anxiety of the Minister seems to be that he should not be seen or recognised. Whether there is really any change in circumstances, or whether in Barbezieux's mind the one precaution included the other, so that there was no need to express it in words, there is nothing to inform us.

The sedan chair with the waxed cloth was not this time called into requisition. The prisoner travelled, as did also Saint-Mars, in a litter. The two lieutenants, De Formanoir and Rosarges, were on horseback, as were also some others, who were there, no doubt, to act as guards. Among the latter were Lecuyer and Ru, both of whom had been with Saint-Mars since the old days at Pignerol, and who both now went on to the Bastille with him. The Free Company, as a whole, was now being disbanded. It had come into existence in 1664 for the purpose of guarding Fouquet and other prisoners of State, had been continued since 1681, apparently for the sole purpose of acting as guard to the Man in the Mask, and now, since its services were not required at the Bastille, was ceasing to exist.

On his way to Paris Saint-Mars was free, by the express order of the king, to choose for himself the places at which he wished to stop to pass the night. Under these circumstances he not unnaturally availed himself of the opportunity of going to see his own house and lands at Palteau, not far from Villeneuve-le-Roi. Some seventy years later, when 'the Iron Mask' had become famous, and all France was eager for any information on the subject, the then owner

of Palteau, M. de Formanoir, the descendant of the De Formanoir who was Saint-Mars' kinsman and lieutenant upon that memorable journey, sent to Saint-Foix the particulars he had been able to collect from the stories handed down among the peasants of the place. His account is worth transcribing. 'M. de Saint-Mars,' he says, 'took his meals with his prisoner, who was placed with his back to the windows of the dining-room, which looked into the courtyard. The peasants whom I have questioned could not see whether he wore his mask while eating, but they took note of the fact that M. de Saint-Mars, who sat opposite to him, had a pair of pistols lying at the side of his plate. They were waited on by a single servant (Antoine Ru) who went to fetch the dishes, which were brought to him into the antechamber, and always was very careful to shut behind him the door of the room where they were dining. The prisoner wore the mask whenever he crossed the courtyard. The peasants noticed that they could see his lips and teeth, that he was tall, and that his hair was white. Saint-Mars slept in a bed which had been placed close alongside that of his prisoner. M. de Blainvilliers told me that after his death, which happened in 1704, he was buried secretly at St. Paul's, and that they had put drugs within the shroud so that the body might be consumed. I have not heard it said that he had any foreign accent.' The M. de Blainvilliers here mentioned cannot, from the internal evidence of the letter, be the cousin of Saint-Mars of that name, who was his lieutenant at Pignerol. That Blainvilliers was appointed Major of the Citadel of Metz when Saint-Mars went to Exiles, and he never was either at Exiles or at Sainte-Marguerite. It must be the De Formanoir of whom we have already spoken,

the grandfather, or perhaps the great-uncle, of the writer of the letter, who probably succeeded the other Blainvilliers, his cousin, in the estate, and so got the name. The evidence, therefore, is excellent. The party arrived at the Bastille on Thursday, September 18, 1698, at three o'clock in the afternoon. Here we come on to the firm ground of Du Jonca's journal, which is our main authority for the short remainder of the prisoner's life. Oddly enough we know less about him during this last period than in the earlier portion of his captivity, the reason no doubt being that communications in Paris between Saint-Mars and the Ministers passed, as a rule, *vivâ voce*, and have left no record behind.

The new prisoner, so soon as it was dark, was taken across to his new quarters. These were on the third floor of the tower Bertaudière, and here it was that, with possibly a brief exception, the prisoner was to pass the remaining days of his life.

Most of our information about the Bastille comes from a book already quoted in the second chapter, Renneville's 'French Inquisition.' He is quite untrustworthy in his assertions, but in his description of the main features of the prison, and the arrangements of the rooms, he would have had small reason for lying and may be followed with some confidence. He himself was at different times in two rooms of the Bertaudière, on the second floor and in the *calotte* or attic. He does not give a pleasant account of the second Bertaudière, where he had the bad luck to succeed a particularly filthy prisoner; but he states expressly that the rooms on the third and fourth floor were better and lighter. He says that he opened communications with those on the floor above, where the

masked prisoner should have been, and found there three men—a count, an English banker, and an Italian abbé, who would not give his name. Whether all these were in a single room, or indeed, whether Renneville is here to be trusted at all, it is hard to tell.

The question whether there may not have been two rooms on each floor of the tower, is one which is of real importance in connection with our prisoner. M. Ravaissou and M. Funck-Brentano, the two men who have studied the archives of the Bastille most closely, say distinctly that there were not, but that each floor consisted of a single large chamber. Renneville, on the other hand, who spent years in the tower, while these two gentlemen were only born long after it was destroyed, is quite clear on the other side. There were seven floors in the tower altogether, he tells us, but ‘*the tower was double*, and on the other side of the staircase I was told that there were four rooms and a *calotte*, like those I have described, which I never could be perfectly informed of.’¹ May it not have been that on the other side of the stairs were smaller rooms, assigned to those prisoners who had to be kept alone and in secret? The reason why the point is important is that once again before his death ‘the ancient prisoner’ appears in Du Jonca’s journal. ‘On Saturday, April 30 (1701), there came young M. Aumont, bringing a prisoner of the name of Maranville under the [prison] name of Riccarville. He was an army officer, discontented and talking too much, and a *mauvais sujet*. I took him in according to the king’s orders, sent by M. le Comte de Pontchartrain, and put him in company with the man called Tirmon, in the second chamber of

the tower Bertaudière, *with the ancient prisoner*, both well locked in.' ¹

Now if there really was only one room on this floor, it would seem impossible to avoid M. Funck-Brentano's conclusion that now at least 'the secret' has become of so little value that not only are no special pains taken to prevent it becoming known, but that the prisoner is actually made to share a room with two other prisoners, both of a low type. Even so, the entry is very strangely worded. Why does not Du Jonca say simply, 'I put him in the second Bertaudière with Tirmon and "the ancient prisoner," and locked them all three securely in.'

The position in that case would be sufficiently grotesque. Here was a man possessed of a great secret of State, whom for thirty years it has been the never-ceasing object of the king and his ministers to keep in such security that he may never reveal the secret to any person whatsoever. For thirty years the most extraordinary precautions have been taken, precautions so unusual that, even in that age of mystery, public attention had been again and again aroused. This man is now, regardless of consequences, put to share a room with two other prisoners. And yet all the time he wears a mask, is never allowed to appear without it, dies in the mask and is buried, and has quicklime or some such agent put with the body to ensure its speedy destruction, so that no one may recognise him. Surely this is a little hard to believe, and wants somewhat stronger evidence than an entry of such very doubtful interpretation. If we may take De Renneville's account as true, the interpretation is easy enough. There are

¹ Funck-Brentano, *Légendes et Archives de la Bastille*, p. 95.

two rooms on the floor, one of them is occupied by the two rascals Maranville and Tirmon, both well locked in, and the other by 'the ancient prisoner,' who has now for some reason been lodged a floor lower than when he went in.

The food in the Bastille was as a rule good enough, surprisingly good according to many accounts. Even Renneville, who cannot say too much against the place, has to admit this. 'I had good soup with toasted bread, a bit of tolerable beef, a *ragoût* of sheep's tongue, and two wigs for my dessert. I was served much after the same manner all the while that I continued in that dismal place, and sometimes they added on my soup the wing or the leg of a fowl, or at other times they would put two little patties on the side of my plate, but I often observed that Ru had intercepted them by the crumbs that remained on the edge of the dish. At night I had either roast veal or mutton, with a little *ragoût*; sometimes a pigeon, and sometimes, but seldom, half a pullet, and now and then a salad.'¹

The following amusing account of how prisoners fared in the Bastille a little later is taken from Marmontel's 'Memoirs,' the date being 1760:—'Two hours afterwards the bolts of the doors were drawn, and two gaolers brought in a dinner, which I supposed was mine since they served it in silence. One of them placed three little dishes covered with plates in front of the fire, the other laid the table. . . . Then Bury' (his servant) 'begged me to take my place, and helped me to soup. It was Friday. The soup was made of white beans and very fresh butter, and there was also a dish of beans, which I found very good. The dish of salt cod which he brought me as a second course was

¹ *The French Inquisition*, p. 75 (Engl. trans.).

better still. The morsel of garlic with which it was seasoned would have tickled the palate even of a Gascon epicure. The wine was not first-rate, but passable. There was no dessert—one could not expect everything—but, on the whole, I was very well satisfied with my dinner in prison.

‘As I was getting up from the table, and Bury was just going to sit down, for there was enough left for him, back came my two gaolers with pyramids of new dishes in their hands. When we saw this service of fine linen and china, and a silver fork and spoon, we saw we had made a mistake; however, we made no remark until our gaolers had retired, and then Bury said to me, “Since you have eaten my dinner, sir, perhaps you will allow me to eat yours.” “That is only fair,” said I, and the walls of the chamber were, I think, greatly astonished to hear our laughter. This dinner was *gras*, and was made up of an excellent soup, a succulent slice of beef, the leg of a boiled capon running with fat, a small dish of artichokes, some spinach, a fine pear, some grapes, a bottle of old Burgundy and a cup of the best Mocha. This formed Bury’s dinner, with the exception of the coffee and the fruit, which he was kind enough to reserve for me.’

Scarcely a single word has come down to us which will enable us to picture, otherwise than by analogy with these records of other prisoners, the kind of life led by our own particular prisoner in the third Bertaudière. But the tradition in the Bastille itself seems to have been clear that he was treated with a good deal of consideration, and such a tradition, though quite likely to be exaggerated, would probably be accurate in the main fact. As regards spiritual matters, we have the definite order that he was to be allowed to confess and

communicate as often as he pleased ; and this privilege, rarely granted to prisoners at that time, was probably the counterpart of others of a more worldly nature. His long and patiently borne confinement may well have won him this much alleviation.

Now we come to the last scene of all—in the graveyard of St. Paul. Once again Du Jonca is our only authority ; without him we should never have been able to identify the death. ‘ On Monday, November 19, 1703, the unknown prisoner, who always wore a mask of black velvet, and had come with M. de Saint-Mars from the Iles Sainte-Marguerite, having been a long time in his charge, having felt somewhat ill yesterday on coming out from Mass, died to-day at ten o’clock in the evening without any great illness : indeed he could not have had less. M. Giraut, our chaplain, confessed him yesterday. Surprised by death, he did not receive the sacraments, but our chaplain exhorted him for a few moments before he died. This man, who had been so long a prisoner, was buried on Tuesday at four o’clock in the afternoon, in the churchyard of St. Paul, our parish church. They have given him an unknown name on the mortuary register, which was signed by M. de Rosarges, the major, and by Arreil, the surgeon.’

‘ I learned afterward that they gave the name of M. de Marchiel on the register. His burying cost 40 francs.’

The register at St. Paul’s is as follows :—

‘ On the 19th Marchioly, aged forty-five or thereabouts, died in the Bastille, whose body was buried in the churchyard of Saint Paul, his parish, the 20th of this month, in the presence of M. Rosage, major of the

Bastille, and M. Reglhe, surgeon-major of the Bastille,
who have signed—

‘ROSARGES,

‘REILHE.’

So at last we leave him, as great a mystery as ever. We have followed his fortunes in his hard lot of captivity from the time when he was brought across France by the major of Dunkirk to be buried alive in Pignerol. For more than thirty-three years he has lived alone, speaking to no one except perhaps Saint-Mars himself, and at Exiles to La Rivière, and all the time never seen by any mortal man except his gaolers.

The central mystery of all, the cause of all this secrecy, remains unsolved.

What was the business on which ‘Eustache Dauger’ had been employed before ever he came to Pignerol?

That question it will be our object to solve in the remaining portions of this volume.

BOOK II

CHARLES II. AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

CHAPTER

- I. A CONVERSION TO THE CATHOLIC RELIGION
- II. NEGOTIATIONS WITH ROME
- III. THE STRANGE HISTORY OF JAMES DE LA CLOCHE
- IV. THE GREAT SECRET
- V. VIOLENT STORMS AND A HAPPY ENDING

CHAPTER I

A CONVERSION TO THE CATHOLIC RELIGION

EVERY schoolboy knows, as Macaulay would have said—and the statement would probably be true at least for all such as have been made to read that author's 'History of England'—that King Charles II. died a Catholic and was received into the Church on his death-bed by Dom John Hudleston of the Order of St. Benedict. But what is much less widely known and, indeed, is only just creeping slowly into our standard histories, is that Charles was a Catholic at heart, so far as intellectual opinion is concerned, for the last thirty years of his life, and was so far from being the sceptic that he has ordinarily been depicted that, at least during the earlier part of his reign, his desire to embrace the Catholic religion and to be at liberty to practice it openly, was the leading idea of his mind, the pivot upon which his whole policy really turned.

Throughout the whole of his reign Charles in religious matters wore a mask. No single person, not even his brother the Duke of York, was given the whole of his confidence. Openly and to the world at large he was a sceptic, the licentiousness of whose life matched well with his total want of religion, to whom everything holy was tedious if not contemptible. That he had more respect for Catholicism than for any other

form of religion was, indeed, obvious, and many of the keener observers about his Court thought he would not be displeased could that religion be again established in England, as being more concordant with an absolute monarchy than was any other. The mask, however, was never really lifted even to his most intimate friends, and it is only by the light that has been thrown on his policy by documents long buried in foreign collections—the counterparts of which have been carefully kept out of our national records—that we have lately come to realise how great a part his religious yearnings really played in his life and policy. It was not only because of a desire for absolute power that he encouraged Catholicism, though that desire was certainly present in him, as in all the Stuarts, but because there was a real wish to regularise his religious position and to live openly as a Catholic, as he was one secretly already by intellectual conviction.

Another point which has only recently been made clear is the relation on these matters which existed between himself and his brother the Duke of York. It has commonly been thought in the past that it was the intense, perhaps bigoted, faith of James which influenced Charles all through his life and led to his death-bed reception. The documents, which are now available, and with which we are going to deal, show clearly enough that this was not the case. So far from James having led the way and Charles having followed haltingly after him, we find that Charles was convinced perhaps twenty years before his brother, and that he had been for years conducting negotiations with Rome and with France of which James had never been allowed to know anything at all. Even at the last, although it was James, no doubt, who actually brought

the priest to his brother's bedside, he did not do so on his own initiative, for he knew so little of his brother's real mind that he fancied he had given up all inclination towards Catholicism. Charles, too, needed no persuasion from him, but acceded eagerly to the proposition as soon as it was put before him.

So, again, with regard to Charles' negotiations with Louis XIV., which culminated in the secret clauses of the treaty of Dover. It has been the fashion to represent Louis as keenly anxious for Charles' conversion as the means of introducing the Catholic religion by force into England, and Charles as accepting money from him as the price of a feigned religious feeling by which Louis was duped. The study of the actual documents shows us that this is an absolute inversion of the truth. It was Charles who was eager to avow his Catholicism, and Louis who, on the whole, was holding him back. Louis' object was to get Charles' help to enable him to crush the Dutch. He had to pay for that help, and the price which Charles asked was the support of French money and perhaps of French arms if the open avowal of his religion should lead to political disturbances in his dominions. This is 'the great secret' of which we shall have more to say hereafter. For the moment the point is that Charles' projected change of religion was not an item added in to please Louis, but the very mainspring of the whole negotiation; but for which there would have been no negotiation at all. It was Charles who approached Louis on the subject—not Louis who came to Charles. With these preliminary observations we pass on to the consideration of the subject more in detail.

‘Fortune had now twice counterfeited and double-gilt the trophies of rebellion, and its brazen trumpet repeated victory betrayed and prostituted, before at Dunbar, and now ravished at Worcester by numerous overpowering forces, on that black and white day, September 3, 1651, in the dusk of which fatal evening, when the ashamed sun had blushed in his setting and plunged his affrighted head into the depth of luckless Severn, and the night, ready to stain and spot her guilty sables with loyal blood, was attiring herself for the tragedy.’ That is to say, in somewhat less turgid language than the original chronicler has made use of in this gem of English prose, it was just after the disastrous defeat at Worcester had put an end, at least for a time, to all hopes of Royalist success. The king himself was a fugitive, hiding where he could from the pursuit of the victorious Roundheads, and trying to make his way to some southern port from whence he could take ship and get to France.

For two nights he had been at Boscobel spending his days, according to the well-known tale, in the branches of a spreading oak, which concealed him from view, and his nights in ‘the priest’s hole’ in Boscobel House. One of his followers, Lord Wilmot, had meanwhile found shelter a few miles off at Moseley Hall, the residence of Mr. Whitgreave, a Catholic gentleman, where Father John Hudleston, a Benedictine monk, was also residing in the capacity of tutor to Mr. Whitgreave’s nephews, and to young Sir John Preston. Father Hudleston would, of course, have been dressed as a layman, and the fact that he was a priest would not have been known to any except the faithful Catholics of the neighbourhood.

To Moseley Hall on the morning of Sunday, September 7, there came over from Boscobel John Pendrell, one of that faithful peasant family who did so much to save the king, with the news that Charles was in great danger of being captured, since search was everywhere being made for him, and they despaired of being able much longer to keep his presence at Boscobel a secret.

On this news 'Mr. Whitgreave and Mr. Hudleston, deeply moved at the king's danger and calamity, having first offered to God their Sunday duty for his majesty's safety,' made arrangements for the king to come to Moseley, a plan which was duly carried out; the king, disguised as a young peasant and called by the name of 'Will Jones,' riding over upon a mill horse, attended by the Pendrells. The disguise was so complete that Mr. Whitgreave, had he not known all the others, would have been quite unable to distinguish the king. 'He had on his head a long white steeple-crowned hat, without any other lining than grease, both sides of the brim so doubled up with handling that they looked like two spouts; a leather doublet full of holes, and half black with grease above the sleeves, collar, and waist, an old green wood-reeve's coat, threadbare, and patched in most places, with a pair of breeches of the same cloth and in the same condition, the flap hanging down loose to the middle of his legs; hose and shoes of different parishes; the hose were grey, stirrups much darned and clouted, especially about the knees, under which he had a pair of flannel riding stockings of his own with the tops cut off. His shoes, too, had been cobbled with leather patches, both on the soles and on the seams, and the upper leathers so cut and slashed to adapt them to his feet, that they could no longer

defend him, either from water or dirt.' ¹ His hair had been cut short by the ears, and his face and hands, dark though he was by nature, had been darkened still more by walnut-tree leaves.

Altogether it was not a very kingly appearance that he presented, and Lord Wilmot's services were required to effect a dignified introduction, which he made in these words: 'Gentlemen, the person whom you see here under this disguise is both your master and mine, and the master to whom we all owe our duty and allegiance.' Thereupon both Mr. Whitgreave and Father Hudleston knelt down and kissed the king's hand, while he in turn was graciously pleased to promise that he in future would never forget the service they were doing him, and 'never would be unmindful either of them or theirs.'

At Moseley Hall the king remained in hiding for three days, living for the most part in the ordinary rooms and sleeping at night on a bed which is still religiously preserved. He took his meals in Father Hudleston's room, old Mrs. Whitgreave sitting with him at the table and carving the meat, while Mr. Whitgreave and Father Hudleston waited upon them. The three boys, who knew nothing more than that a cavalier friend of their tutor's was hiding in the house, kept watch at the garret windows for soldiers and other dangerous persons, ready to give a timely warning in case any such should be seen approaching, so that the king might at once be placed in a secure hiding-place.

On Tuesday, September 9, Charles had a long talk with Father Hudleston. He asked especially how Catholics were faring under the Puritan government. Father Hudleston replied that they were persecuted

¹ The quotations are from F. Hudleston's own narrative.

alike for their religion and for their loyalty, yet they did not neglect the duties of their Church. He then took the king upstairs into the garret—the usual place for worship in a Catholic house in those days of persecution—and showed him the chapel, ‘little, but neat and decent.’ ‘The king, looking respectfully upon the altar, and regarding the crucifix and candlesticks upon it, said he had an altar, crucifix and silver candlesticks of his own, till my Lord of Holland brake them, which, added the king, he hath now paid for.’

Then they came downstairs again and began to look over Father Hudleston’s books. One of these appeared to interest the king especially. It was a short treatise in manuscript, written by ‘Mr. Richard Hudleston, a Benedictine monk,’ the uncle of Father John Hudleston and a member of the Cassinese congregation, and was entitled ‘A Short and Plain Way to the Faith and Church.’ This treatise his majesty read through attentively, and when he had finished he expressed his opinion of it in very definite terms. ‘I have not seen,’ he said, ‘anything more plain and clear upon this subject. The arguments here drawn from succession are so conclusive, I do not conceive how they can be denied.’ He also took up a copy of Mr. Turbervill’s catechism, and said ‘it was a pretty book, and he would take it along with him.’

Just at this juncture there came a disturbance. Soldiers were seen coming towards the house, and timely warning of their approach was given by one of the servants. The king was forthwith hurried into the private hiding-place and remained there while the soldiers interviewed Mr. Whitgreave down below. They had no suspicion of Charles’ presence in the house, but wanted to arrest Mr. Whitgreave as having

fought in Worcester fight. He, however, was able to bring friends to prove that he had never left his house, and so persuaded them to leave him unmolested and his house unsearched, and they accordingly went away without taking further action.

So soon as the soldiers were clear of the house and the danger had for the moment passed away, they helped the king out of his confinement. Hudleston, who knew that Charles was aware of his priestly character, thereupon took the opportunity of reminding him of the fact that all priests in England had lived habitually for a hundred years past under the conditions which the king had just experienced. 'Your majesty is, in some sort, in the same condition with me now—liable to dangers and perils; but I hope God, that brought you hither, will preserve you here, and that you will be as safe in this place as in any castle of your dominions.' The king then, addressing himself to both Mr. Whitgreave and Father Hudleston, replied: 'If it please God I come to my crown, both you and all your persuasion shall have as much liberty as any of my subjects.'

The 'priest's hole' where Charles passed that unpleasant hour may still be seen. It is entered nowadays through a trap-door in the corner of a cupboard off the old panelled bedroom in which Charles was sleeping, but in those days it could be approached only through a secret door in the panelling. 'Devoid of light and almost of air, the only accommodation provided in this dismal hiding hole is a rude seat of brick at one end. Liquid food was usually conveyed by means of a quill or a reed passed through some hidden chink in the moulding of the brickwork or timber beams, to unfortunate priests hidden in these

contrivances for days and weeks at a stretch.’¹ The king, no doubt, found even an hour or two quite long enough to spend in such a place.

Charles left Moseley Hall that same night, and after many adventures succeeded in reaching Shoreham and thence escaping to the Continent. From that time onwards he seems to have been intellectually a Catholic, and the cause of his conversion was this little pamphlet of Father Richard Hudleston, which he saw at Moseley Hall. That at least is very definitely asserted by Father John Hudleston, who certainly ought to have known the truth, in the letter addressed to the queen published after Charles’ death, and prefixed to the pamphlet in question. But intellectual conviction still left him a long way from being a Catholic in reality. He placed himself more or less under instruction with M. Olier, the founder of the Sulpicians in Paris; he wrote kind letters and made many promises to Catholic convents on the Continent; he went so far as to call himself a Catholic in private conversations and among intimate friends; but he never could make up his mind to take the actual and final step. If he could have been received privately, and still allowed to perform the offices of religion demanded by the Established Church, he would, no doubt, have availed himself gladly of the permission. But that was, of course, impossible, and so he drifted on. He had no mind to lose his throne and position. If Henri IV. held that ‘Paris was well worth a Mass,’ Charles II. in like manner held that the throne of England was worth more to him than fidelity to his religious opinions, and so he remained to the very last hours of his life a Papist at heart, but too timid to declare himself; shielding his fellow-Catholics

¹ Fea, *Flight of the King*, p. 76.

when he could do so without too much danger to himself, but often, on the other hand, whenever pressure became too strong for him, acquiescing in their torture and death; and consoling himself for his inability to follow the religion in which alone he had come to believe, not only by constant indulgence in unlawful pleasures, but by continual mocking at the ministrations of the Established Church, of which he was nominally a member, but which he heartily despised. No wonder that he won for himself among his contemporaries the reputation of a sceptic and unbeliever, which has stuck to him so persistently ever since, and which yet, as we shall hope to show, is so very far removed from the actual truth. It is not, it must be confessed, an heroic picture that we have to present, but it does afford an interesting psychological study, and it puts before us the story of one who must have been beyond most men a very miserable man, although to the outside world he was known as the 'Merry Monarch.'

Matters were in this state when the events of 1660 called Charles to the throne. He came to it, there can be little doubt, intending at the earliest possible moment to declare his religion, and to take the necessary steps, as his predecessor, Queen Mary, had done before him, to bring back the kingdom to the obedience of the Holy See. He might well be excused for utterly misapprehending the difficulties of so doing, for he had lived so much abroad that he could know but little of the true temper of the English people, so that he could hardly be expected to realise that his first Parliament, 'more episcopal than the bishops, more royalist than the king,' was at the same time just as bitterly anti-Papal as any of its Roundhead predecessors could

possibly have been. It cannot have taken long for Charles to discover that any immediate step was utterly out of the question.

Nevertheless, all the king's actions from the very beginning of his reign were aimed constantly in this direction. Almost his first act was to make arrangements for the reopening of his mother's palace and chapel at Somerset House, thus providing the Catholics of London once more with a place where Mass could be heard without fear of persecution. This was done with a great want of tact; and, though hostile feeling was inevitable under the circumstances, much more was aroused than was in any way necessary, and the relief which the opening of this semi-public chapel undoubtedly brought to the Catholics of the city was very nearly forfeited in consequence. The king favoured Catholics in every way that he dared, and though the penal laws against them still remained on the Statute book, in practice their execution was very much restrained.

The next important matter to be taken in hand was the king's marriage. The names of various Protestant princesses were suggested, but Charles would not hear of any one of them, declaring that the very thought of marrying a Protestant made him sick. He would not hear of any but a Catholic bride; and, accordingly, after some abortive negotiations with the King of France, a marriage was duly arranged with the Princess Catherine of Portugal, whose father was as yet by no means sure upon his throne, and was consequently willing to give a good dowry with his daughter in the hope of securing the support of England.

The new queen arrived at Portsmouth from Portugal on May 13, 1662. Contrary to the usual

custom in such cases, the marriage had not been performed by proxy before she started. The ostensible reason given for this was that Portuguese susceptibilities would not allow of the ceremony being gone through with a proxy who was not a Catholic ; rather an odd scruple considering that they apparently had no objection to a bridegroom who was in the same position. The real reason probably was that the Pope had not yet recognised the right of Catherine's father to the throne of Portugal, so that he would have been described in the dispensation necessary for a mixed marriage only as Duke of Braganza, which was not consonant with his dignity. Be that as it may, the fact remains that no marriage had taken place in Portugal, so it became necessary to solemnize the ceremony immediately on her arrival in England. Charles hurried down to Portsmouth to meet her, and the marriage took place in Catherine's bedroom, performed by Lord d'Aubigny, her almoner, no one else being present except Father Philip Howard, the Portuguese ambassador, and two or three Portuguese noblemen and ladies. Sheldon, the Bishop of London, who had come down for the purpose of performing the ceremony, thus found himself forestalled, and if he had chosen to make mischief serious trouble might easily have ensued. He contented himself, however, with little more than a formal declaration that the marriage had been properly performed, without saying by whom it had been done, and in this way public scandal was averted. Sheldon was rewarded for his complaisance in this matter by promotion to the see of Canterbury when that fell vacant a year or two later.

The fact that there were now two Catholic queens in England necessitated the provision of a second

Chapel Royal for the new queen's use, and this was accordingly erected at St. James's, in the building now known as the German Chapel, the queen dowager being left in undisturbed possession of Somerset House. The charge of the new chapel was given to D'Aubigny, who had with him two distinct houses of religious: the one a number of Portuguese Franciscans of the reform of St. Peter of Alcantara, who lived in a convent just where the Guards' Club now is, and the other of English Benedictines, under Dom Bennet Stapylton, among whom was included that same Father John Hudleston of whom we have already spoken.

In each of the two chapels the Catholic service was now performed quite openly and with a good deal of splendour, and attended by crowds not only of Catholics but of curious sightseers. Among these latter we find Mr. Pepys, who, the first time that he ventured in, stood gazing at the bottom of the church until he was told sharply either to kneel down or to go, whereupon he took his departure. A few years later he was much more at home when he went to midnight Mass on Christmas Day, and stayed from 'nine at night till two of the morning in a very great crowd, and there expected but found nothing extraordinary, there being nothing but a highe Masse.' Even at two o'clock, when he left, there were still people receiving the sacrament, so the crowd must indeed have been great. Pepys had expected to have seen a 'child born and dressed there,' and so far the service had been a disappointment; but he had liked the music and also looking at 'my Lady Castlemaine, who looked prettily in her nightclothes.'

The history of the Catholic Chapels Royal under the Stuart kings is so little known nowadays that it

may be of interest to spend a few moments upon them, especially as it is not easy to understand certain episodes of the reign of Charles II.—the details, for instance, of the pretended Popish Plot—without some knowledge of their arrangements. The queens of England in those days had their own separate palace at Somerset House, which was their own private property for life. Here they lived, if they chose to do so, even during their husbands' lifetime, and it remained theirs, as a dower-house, in the event of their surviving the king. The king's palace at this period was Whitehall; and St. James's Palace, though also his property, was given over to a large extent, much as it is at present, to other members of the royal family. In Charles II.'s reign it was the London residence of the Duke of York.

At the Restoration, therefore, Somerset House was not available for the palace of the queen consort. It was the private property of the queen dowager, Henrietta Maria, for life; though she had not been in enjoyment of her property during the period of the Commonwealth. In that palace there had been secured to her by treaty at the time of her marriage with Charles I. the right to a public chapel with full Catholic rites, and a sufficient number of priests for keeping up the services. She had built, accordingly, a chapel of some pretensions, where the tennis court had formerly stood; and this had been served in the days of Charles I. by ten French Capuchin priests, with whom were associated two Oratorians. These priests seem to have lived, not in Somerset House itself, but in the adjoining palace of the Savoy, which was also included in the queen's possessions. The name of Friary Court survived until the destruction of the Savoy in 1750.

During the Cromwellian period Somerset House seems to have belonged to the Protector, though he very seldom occupied it. Its convenient situation, between London and Westminster, caused it to be chosen, however, for his lying in state after death. The chapel, no doubt dismantled, was handed over to French Protestants, and a preacher of the name of Mons. d'Espagne was appointed to the charge.

In 1660 Henrietta resumed possession of her palace, and the French Protestant intruders were, no doubt, given short notice to clear out. She determined to return at once to England, and started on her journey one day at the end of October. The weather was very different from that which had prevailed on the disastrous day when she had quitted the country to which she was now returning, when a great storm had raged, and all the furniture of her chapel, including the great relic of the Holy Cross, which had been its most precious possession, had been lost in the shipwreck. Then Henrietta herself had been alone unmoved amid the lamentations of her ladies, remarking proudly that 'Queens do not drown.' On this occasion there prevailed an extraordinary calm which made the sea look like glass, and there was not sufficient wind to fill the sails. Hence, the journey from Calais to Dover, which, as the queen's chaplain observes, 'may with a fair wind sometimes be accomplished in three hours,' took, in spite of the utmost efforts of the crew, no less than two full days.

The king met the party at Dover, and a feast was made at Dover Castle, at which the French Capuchins at once began, probably with the approval of their mistress, the same ill-advised procedure which had done so much harm in former days. The king's

chaplain said grace, as was clearly his right, and blessed the food in the Protestant fashion, but Père Gamache, the head of the newly arrived Capuchins, was not going to be set aside in this way, and promptly rose and said the Catholic grace, *Benedic Domine nos*, in a loud and solemn voice, at the same time making a great sign of the cross over the dishes which had been set upon the table. This bold proceeding, as may be supposed, caused considerable annoyance to the Puritans, the Independents, and the Quakers (*trembleurs*), who were present in large numbers as spectators. Their discontent was by no means lessened when the next morning the good priest proceeded to celebrate High Mass before the queen in the chief hall of Dover Castle, with all the doors open, and in the presence of a great number of people, many of whom, as he says, were inflamed with rage, 'from the blind and most criminal aversion which they bear to the Roman Church.' These proceedings might easily have stirred up a revolt, and gone far to lose the king the crown he had so recently and unexpectedly regained, but the indiscretions were apparently rather encouraged by the queen-mother.

Sometimes the contest between the two chaplains, Catholic and Protestant, was pushed to a most unseemly extent, though of course the Catholic had, in right, no position at all, the reigning king being still nominally a Protestant and England a Protestant country. On one occasion, for instance, before Somerset House was yet ready for occupation, it happened at the palace of Whitehall, where the queen was staying as the guest of her son, that the dishes were already on the table and their majesties waiting for grace, but neither chaplain had as yet arrived. Each hurried to be there,

and raced to arrive there first, forcing their way with some violence through the people that filled the room. The minister fell to the ground in the struggle, amidst shouts of laughter from the lords and gentlemen round the king, who called out that Protestantism was upset, knocked down and floored, and that the Catholic Church was victorious. For the priest had said the grace and dinner was begun before the minister had recovered from his tumble or gained his place.

The preparation of Somerset House for the queen-mother's residence was at once put in hand. It was much dilapidated and could not be occupied without repair. 'Ruins and desolation,' said Henrietta, 'are everywhere about and around me.' While the repairs were in progress the queen went back for a time to France, where the Princess Henrietta was married to 'Monsieur,' the Duke of Orleans, younger brother of Louis XIV., and it was not till July 1662 that she at length again returned to England.

The marriage of Charles II. with the Infanta Catherine of Portugal had by that time taken place, and there was, consequently, now a second Catholic queen in England, possessed, like the first, of a treaty right to a chapel royal and an ecclesiastical establishment of her own. Since Somerset House would not be available for this purpose until the death of the dowager queen, orders were given to prepare a second chapel at St. James's.

The queen-mother's establishment was arranged on a scale of considerable magnificence. She had as her lord almoner the Abbé Montague, brother to the Earl of Manchester. He was at the head of her chapel, which was served by the same Capuchins and Oratorians as before. After a time the Oratorians were sent away,

and the Capuchins remained alone. The old services were all resumed, and the chapel became once more, as it had been in the reign of Charles I., the centre of Catholic life in London—a great boon to the dwellers in the city because of its great accessibility. There was an Order in Council which forbade any except the queen's own household to attend either there or at St. James's, but in all probability this order, which was issued in July 1662, was never meant to be enforced, but was put forth only to provide an answer in case the king should be attacked in Parliament upon the subject. In any case, there seems to have been no real difficulty put in the way of Catholics going either to Somerset House or St. James's, and many who were not Catholics seem to have gone also without fear of consequences. Mr. Pepys went to both in one day in 1664, and found Somerset House 'made very fine, and was ten times more crowded than the queen's chapel at St. James's, which I wonder at.'

In 1665, when the Plague broke out, the French Capuchins did noble work among the sufferers, going everywhere without fear to carry the sacraments to the dying. Two of their number themselves fell victims to the disease, and they thus won a transient popularity from the people of London.

The unfinished building, which had been commenced some forty years before in the western portion of St. James's Palace to form a Catholic chapel for Henrietta Maria on her marriage, was now put in hand again for Queen Catherine. It is not very clear whether it ever had been occupied at all, since the time of Charles I., but in any case it was now so much out of repair as to need to be practically rebuilt before it could fitly be used for Divine service. The work was a

long time in hand, and the chapel was not complete and ready for use until September 1662.

In the staffing of this new chapel Charles saw his chance of doing something towards the fulfilment of the promises he had made before his accession, and especially of showing his gratitude towards the English Benedictines, who had shown him many kindnesses during his exile, one of which, that of Dom John Hudleston at Moseley, has already been recorded. Accordingly, he opened negotiations with their chief, Father Austin Hungate, offering a sum of one hundred pounds annually for the support of each of six fathers, and fifty pounds each for such lay brothers as might be considered necessary. They were to live together in community at the palace, and to have the charge of the royal chapel.

As may be supposed, the Benedictines were not very long in making up their minds to accept this very liberal and quite unexpected offer. To men who had been accustomed never to visit their native land except at the risk of being sentenced, if they should unfortunately be detected, to the most terrible and humiliating of deaths as public traitors—and who had themselves in many instances spent years together in an English dungeon for no other offence than their priesthood—such an offer must have presented itself as brilliant indeed. They were no longer to be proscribed by the law, no longer to be fugitives, hunted like wild beasts from shelter to shelter, and living under perpetual fear of apprehension; but were to be allowed to reside at the Court itself, free to live in community and to exercise all the duties of their religious life, and to minister to all comers in a large public, or at least semi-public, church in the metropolis itself. Who could

say of what developments this might not be the humble beginning?

The priests chosen for this work were Dom Benret Stapylton, of the Yorkshire family of that name; Anselm Touchet, son of Lord Castlehaven; Lionel Sheldon, Placid Adelham, Austin Latham, and, lastly, John Hudleston.

Some years later, in 1666, the queen determined to increase her ecclesiastical establishment at St. James's by bringing over some Portuguese Franciscans. For these she built a new convent to the west of the palace. The buildings were ready by the beginning of 1667, and the fathers were already in residence when Pepys came to pay a visit to Father Howard, the lord almoner. 'I saw the dortoir,' he tells us, 'and the cells of the priests, and we went into one, a very pretty little room, very clean, hung with pictures, set with books. The priest was in his cell, with hair clothes to his skin, bare legged, with a sandal only on, and his little bed without sheets, and no feather bed, but yet, I thought, soft enough. His cord about his middle, but in so good company, living with ease, I thought it a very good life. A pretty library they have, and it was in the refectoire, where every man his napkin, knife, cup of earth and basin of the same, and a place for one to sit and read, while the rest are at meals. And into the kitchen I went, where a good neck of mutton at the fire, and other victuals boiling. I do not think they fared very hard. Their windows all looking into a fine garden and the park, and mighty pretty rooms all. I wished myself one of the Capuchins.'

The very next year, however, Mr. Pepys's curiosity in Catholic matters received a rude shock. On October 26, 1668, he had gone upstairs to have his head

combed by Deb, his wife's maid, 'which occasioned the greatest sorrow to me that I ever knew, for my wife coming up suddenly did find me embracing the girl.' Mrs. Pepys's indignation knew no bounds, and she 'grew quite out of order.' However, after careful pondering, she hit upon an ingenious scheme of revenge, and about two in the morning waked her unfaithful spouse to tell him, among many tears and as a great secret, that 'she was a Roman Catholique and had received the holy sacrament.' The plan worked admirably. Pepys was thoroughly disturbed and frightened, though much relieved a few weeks afterwards to find that after all 'she is not so strictly a Catholique as not to go to church with me, which pleased me mightily.' As a matter of fact, she does not appear ever to have been a Catholic in any sense at all, but she so succeeded in alarming her husband that from that time forward he fails us altogether as an authority upon the doings in connection with the queens' chapels.

The later history of the two chapels need not detain us long. In 1669 Queen Henrietta Maria died in France, and Somerset House passed to Queen Catherine, who, after an interval, shut up the chapel at St. James's, and moved her establishment, Benedictines, Franciscans, and all. For a time the palace had been closed and the chapel left without services, which was a matter of great distress to the Catholics of the city. There was an idea at one time of handing it over to the Portuguese ambassador, but this was not carried out, and at length the queen determined to move her own Court there, and to shut up the chapel at St. James's. The migration took place on May 30, 1671.

Two years later, in 1673, the Duke of York was married to Mary of Modena. He was anxious to be

allowed to reopen the chapel at St. James's for the use of himself and his wife, but things were already becoming very difficult, and Charles absolutely refused to allow the opening of a second semi-public chapel at that juncture. James had, therefore, to content himself with a private chapel inside St. James's Palace, which was served by two of the Benedictines, who were now living in the Savoy and attached to Somerset House. It was from this little private chapel that the Sacrament was procured, and brought to Charles on his deathbed.

The next year, 1674, popular anti-Catholic clamour had increased to such an extent that it was thought wise that Father Howard, the queen's almoner, should leave England. He withdrew to his own convent of Bornheim, and was shortly afterwards summoned to Rome and created Cardinal. This withdrawal, however, was by no means sufficient to satisfy the Protestant demands, and in 1675 Charles yielded to the storm so far as to issue, in spite of the protests of the Duke of York, an Order in Council commanding all English-born priests to leave England at once and not to return. There was, however, one priest exempted by name—'Mr. John Hudlestone, who was eminently serviceable to His Majesty in his escape from Worcester.' The queen's chapel was expressly included, but there was no mention made of the Duke of York's, which, being private, was very likely hardly known to exist. The two Benedictines who were living at St. James's accordingly stayed on in London, although their position must henceforth have been difficult and even dangerous, but the others had to leave Somerset House at once, and from that time onward the chapel there was served solely by the Portuguese Franciscans. Only 'Mr. John

Hudlestone' was left, and he stayed on at Somerset House for the remaining years of Charles' reign—the only Catholic priest of English birth for all those years who could venture to go abroad without fear, and without disguising his sacred calling.

CHAPTER II

NEGOTIATIONS WITH ROME

THE accession of Charles to the throne had taken place amid such universal signs of acceptance that he himself may easily have been deceived as to the real feelings of the nation. He had lived so long abroad, out of touch with his own people, that he hardly realised the depth and intensity of English sentiment at this period on all subjects connected with Rome and the Papacy, and may have thought such a reconciliation as he had dreamed of in the days of his exile would prove to be much more feasible than it really was. What might not a king be able to do who came to his throne among such scenes of joy and enthusiasm? His Parliament seemed to him unlikely to stand in his way, and might, he thought, be bent without difficulty to his will. He had yet to learn how bitterly anti-Catholic were even Clarendon and the most loyal of the Cavaliers, and that in any desire to see the Pope brought back to England he stood absolutely alone, with scarcely a single supporter whom he could trust without reserve. But this discovery came later. At the moment of his restoration he was sanguine and full of hope that before many years had passed he would be reigning as a Catholic king over an England once more united to the Roman See.

We can trace these aspirations in all the acts of his

first years upon the throne. In the declaration which he sent from Breda to General Monk before he took ship for England he announced himself as being in favour of religious toleration, and after his arrival in England he did all he could with safety to favour the religion he desired to adopt. These various actions are duly recorded and set forth in the memorial sent to Rome, the story of which we are now going to tell.

Towards the end of 1662, when he had been on the throne for two years, the king determined on a more definite step, which was no less than to communicate with Rome itself, and to try to open up negotiations for the reconciliation of the kingdom with the Holy See. He could not but be aware, however, that for such a step the profoundest secrecy was necessary. To communicate with Rome, no matter what the object might be, would have appeared the deadliest of sins to most of those by whom he was surrounded, and the premature disclosure of his intentions might well have raised such a storm as would have driven him once more from his throne and sent him again into banishment. We must not wonder, therefore, that in consequence of this secrecy no trace of such a mission appears to remain among the English records. Probably the papers relating to it never went beyond the king's own hands, and were by him destroyed when there was no longer hope of a successful issue. It is in Rome, and to a lesser degree in Paris, that the documentary evidence of the fact can still be found, and it is from the Roman and the French records that the papers we propose to quote have been given to the world.

The agent on whom Charles fixed his choice was one Richard Bellings, an Irish gentleman of good

family, who was acting as private secretary to Queen Henrietta Maria at Somerset House. He was, as need scarcely be said, a Catholic. He started from England in the autumn of 1662, ostensibly visiting the Continent for private reasons of his own, and bent his steps towards Rome so soon as he was free from observation.

The primary object of his journey, or rather the business which he was instructed to bring forward in the first place, and which he was to allow to be thought the sole object for which he had come, was to make request on behalf of the king for a cardinal's hat for his kinsman, the Abbé d'Aubigny. This was Ludovic Stuart, a son of the Duke of Lennox and Gordon, who had been educated abroad and whom Charles had brought with him to England and had made lord almoner to his consort, Queen Catherine of Braganza, at St. James's Palace. To this end Bellings was entrusted with a memorandum on the subject, which for greater secrecy had been drawn up entirely by Clarendon himself, who was then Lord Chancellor, and copied by his own son. Every page of this memorandum bore the royal signature in proof of its authenticity, and the whole was dated from London, October 25, 1662. He had with him also autograph letters of introduction from the king to Cardinal Chigi, the nephew of the reigning Pope, Alexander VII., who was then acting as secretary of state, and to Cardinal Barberini, who was cardinal protector of Great Britain and its affairs at the pontifical court. Both these letters appear to have perished, but two other letters, one from the queen-mother and the other from Queen Catherine, both addressed to Cardinal Orsini, the Protector of Portugal, still survive. They are both written in French, of which the following is a translation :

'To my Cousin the Cardinal Orsini.

'My Cousin,—I beg you to favour with your protection and support the business which Mr. Bellings, the bearer of this, is to negotiate on my part in the Court of Rome, particularly in regard to my cousin, Monsieur d'Aubigny, high almoner to my daughter-in-law. His near relationship to the king, my son, and his other merits make me hope for a happy issue to the request which I am pressing with great insistence on his Holiness. I shall be greatly obliged for the trouble which you will take in this matter, and when occasion offers I will not fail to give you proof of my gratitude, being

'My Cousin,

'Your very good Cousin,

'HENRIETTA MARIA R.

'From London, the 30th October, 1662.'

Queen Catherine's letter was of the same tone, but even more insistent:

'My Cousin,—Amid the many reasons I have for joy, I cannot fail to be deeply touched by the strange condition of the Church in the kingdoms of the king, my brother, and in these. Nobody knows better than you how they are in Portugal, since you have so generously undertaken its protection; but I can tell you that I should have great apprehension of the ill effects of the grief of the king, my lord and husband, and of his ministers, if the Court of Rome persists in refusing him the favour which he asks for his relation, Monsieur d'Aubigny, my high almoner. I leave it to Mr. Bellings, whom I send to assure his Holiness of my obedience, to fully explain everything to you, and I beg you to give him entire credence.

'I am, my Cousin,

'Your very affectionate Cousin,

'London: 25th October, 1662.' 'CATHERINE R.

The original memorandum has not yet come to light, if it still exists, but a brief *précis* of its contents, or at least of the instructions under which Bellings was to act, and which presumably was put in writing by Bellings himself, is still extant. It is summarised under three heads as follows:—

‘1. His Majesty requests this promotion for the advantage of his kingdom, and in order to secure for the Catholic party an authorised head, closely allied to the king by the ties of blood, on whom he can rely under all circumstances with the utmost confidence. The king, to use his own words, sees in the elevation to the cardinalate of M. l’Abbé d’Aubigny “a condition essential to the good understanding which ought to reign between the Pope and himself, and he judges this measure to be of the greatest importance for the general good of his Roman Catholic subjects throughout the whole extent of his dominions.”

‘2. When once he is named cardinal, his Majesty engages to support him with all the splendour which befits his dignity and title as a kinsman of the king.

‘3. His Majesty commands his Minister not to enter upon any other business till he has obtained entire satisfaction as to the promotion of M. d’Aubigny. In case of refusal the envoy is to take leave and to return without saying a word on the other points on which his Majesty has charged him to negotiate.’

Bellings arrived in Rome very early in 1663, and at once set about the work with which he had been charged. He called upon a number of the cardinals whom he judged most likely to be of service, and found them, so far as we can gather, by no means hostile to the matter in hand. Cardinal Orsini wrote a letter on his behalf to Cardinal Sforza Pallavicini. This letter,

with another one written on the following day, has survived among Cardinal Pallavicini's papers. In the first Cardinal Orsini says that he is leaving Rome the next day on business connected with his estates, but that he is writing to introduce Mr. Bellings, with whom he has just had an interview, and who has left him with the intention of calling upon Cardinal Barberini, and then, unless he were too long delayed, of going on the same evening to call on Cardinal Pallavicini. He goes on :—

‘I have felt it my duty to let your Eminence know this beforehand, at the same time begging you, as I have already done in conversation, to help forward in every way you can the success of a matter whose results may be so happy for the Catholic religion. I write this to your Eminence, so that in case you should wish to speak with me on the subject, or it should be necessary for me to act in any way, you may know that it will be sufficient to communicate with Mgr. Orsini, and in a very few hours I shall be back in Rome. Meanwhile, Mr. Bellings will come to see you, and I have already done with him all that seems to me most likely to lead to the happy termination of the business.’

In the second letter, written the following day, he merely says that he has decided after all to put off his journey and not to leave Rome.

One other letter, which throws light on Bellings' proceedings at Rome, has survived among the archives of the Jesuits. It was written by Bellings himself to Father Thomas Courtenay, an English Jesuit at Rome, who held office as one of the confessors attached to St. Peter's. He says :

‘I shall punctually obey the orders of Cardinal Barberini, and shall be careful to arrive in time to visit

the Cardinal of Aragon. The king, his master, if I am well informed, is exceedingly desirous of the friendship of ours, and I shall not fail to make his Eminence understand that nothing will conduce more efficaciously to that end than loyal service in the matter of which I have come to treat. I am just returned from Cardinal Chigi, who received me with much kindness, and has given me good hopes that his assistance is secured. A thousand thanks to Fr. Vicar¹ for all his kindness.

‘I am,

‘R. BELLINGS.’

Meanwhile, much as Pope Alexander VII. and the Cardinals desired to accede to Charles's request, there were grave difficulties in the way. The Pope referred the matter to one of the congregations of cardinals, of which apparently Cardinal Pallavicini was acting as secretary, and for their guidance a *votum*, or skilled opinion, was drawn up by the theologians attached to that congregation in the capacity of consultors. This *votum* has been preserved, and is of considerable interest :

‘MOST EMINENT AND MOST REVEREND LORD,—

‘The request of the King of England to our Lord (the Pope) for the promotion to the Cardinalate of his kinsman Aubigny, appears to merit kindly consideration from your Eminence, on account of the great good to Catholicism which may be hoped for if it is granted, and also the great evil which may be feared if it is refused.

‘When King James, the grandfather of Charles II., at the moment when he had been declared the successor

¹ This would be Father Paul Oliva, afterwards General of the Society of Jesus.

of Elizabeth, asked Pope Clement VIII. to be so good as to create an English Cardinal,¹ the answer was that he would willingly do so, so soon as the king should himself have brought about some alleviation of the sufferings of Catholics in his dominions. Now, the condition which was then imposed upon James has been spontaneously fulfilled by Charles, his grandson. In fact, from the very hour in which he first set foot in his kingdom, the king has been opposed to the penalties enacted against the Catholics, nor has he to this day allowed any layman, or any missionary, to be molested for their faith. He has been able to prevent any of them being sought out to take the double oath of allegiance and supremacy, although Parliament has continued to enforce this upon Presbyterians and all other dissenters. Thus, in the last session of Parliament, which was prorogued till February 1663, when certain Catholics presented a memorial for the total abrogation of the Penal Laws, and there were secretly proposed certain limiting clauses which tended to divide the Catholics among themselves and to prejudice the authority of the Pope, the king suppressed the memorial and prevented the plan from succeeding, lest they should be involved in internal dissensions and end by exposing those who remained faithful to the Pope to all the rigours of the previously existing laws. . . . Further, when that protestation was presented by the Irish, so contrary to the obedience due to the Apostolic See, he never consented to receive it or to approve it, thus manifesting his respectful consideration for the august person of the Roman Pontiff. It cannot be

¹ Is there any other evidence of this request and its refusal? Queen Anne of Denmark, the consort of James I., made a request of this kind at a later date on behalf of Conn.

doubted that the tranquillity which is at this moment enjoyed by the English Catholics depends solely upon the goodwill of the king and upon his sympathies with the Pope and with Catholicism. There is only one obstacle which hinders Parliament from proposing new measures of persecution, and the Protestant bishops and the royal Law Courts from putting into effect all the cruellest details of the old legislation, and that obstacle is the fear of incurring thereby his majesty's displeasure. But for this fear, and the conviction that the king really has the peace of Catholics at heart, all the scenes of persecution which have for so many years desolated the Church of England would soon reappear. We have therefore judged that it is highly desirable to accede to the promotion of Lord Aubigny, and to this act of condescension to confirm the good inclinations of the king towards the Pope and the Catholics.'

To this *votum*, or formal opinion of the theologians to whom the question was remitted, there is appended a summary of the various ways in which the king had already shown, in the two years since his restoration, his desire to help on the cause of the oppressed Catholics of his realm. This summary was probably drawn up by Cardinal de Retz, who was visited by Bellings in Paris on his way out to Rome,¹ and is of

¹ *Memoirs of Guy Joli*, vol. ii. p. 81, where it is stated that Cardinal de Retz made a special journey to Hamburg in order to interest Queen Christina of Sweden in the project. It is also stated that Charles decided, at the instigation of Cardinal de Retz, to send a fleet of twenty ships of war through the Straits to lie off Civit  Vecchia, with a view to intimidating the Pope and frightening him into granting what was asked. It is unlikely, however, that this was actually done, though very possibly it is true that De Retz made the suggestion. It seems to be altogether inconsistent with what we know of the attitude of Charles at this time towards the Holy See.

very considerable interest, as no other record of several of these actions has been preserved. As, so far as we are aware, it is by no means generally known, it will be as well to quote it at length, in spite of its being rather long.

‘Benefits which the Catholics of England have received from his Britannic Majesty :—

‘(1) The king has raised the sequestration imposed throughout the kingdom, during the protectorate of Cromwell, upon the property of a multitude of Catholics.

‘(2) He has suspended the execution of penal laws which bear with extreme severity on the Roman Catholics ; as, for instance, in the case of the rich, to undergo the confiscation of two-thirds of their lands, and of their goods ; in the case of the poor, to pay two pieces of silver every time that they did not present themselves on Sunday at the Protestant temple ; and other regulations not less arbitrary.

‘(3) He has set at liberty all the priests and religious who were imprisoned in various parts of the kingdom, and among them several who had been condemned to death for no other reason than that they were priests.

‘(4) He has put a check on the despotic action of the agents of the public force and the collectors of taxes, who have been in the habit of ransacking the houses of Catholics in the hope of discovering priests hidden therein ; an intolerable vexation, since any infraction of the law on this point involved for the delinquent the loss of all his goods, as well as perpetual imprisonment.

‘(5) He has insisted on marrying a Catholic, although heretic princesses were proposed to him who

were possessed of an equal, or even a more considerable dowry.

‘(6) He has authorised the opening in the town of London of two Catholic chapels royal; the one, that of the queen mother, served by English Benedictines, who there sing the canonical hours wearing the habit of their order; the other, that of the queen consort, of which the administration is in the hands of the Capuchins. In these two sanctuaries the Catholics can, to their great consolation, assist at divine service with complete liberty.

‘(7) He has made frequent gifts to the English religious women established in Flanders. To those of Ghent in particular, directly he was proclaimed in London, and while he was still in Holland, he sent 1,600 crowns, with a message that these were only the earnest of the assistance that he pledged himself to give them at a later date.

‘(8) These same nuns of Ghent have received from him permission to build themselves another convent, with a church, at Dunkirk. The buildings are nearly completed, and the king has contributed towards them not less than 12,000 crowns.

‘(9) He has deigned on several occasions to admit to his audience, with great affability, priests and religious, notably two Provincials of the Society of Jesus, the present one and his predecessor, and to all he has promised cordially his royal protection.

‘(10) On a certain great feast day he attended in person, with all his suite, at the chapel of the queen consort, where he heard a great part of the Mass with much devotion, outside the tribunes¹ and in full view

¹ A tribune is any kind of private box or enclosed place from which Mass can be heard without the occupants forming part of the general congregation.

of all. At the moment of consecration he was seen to give all the signs of profound respect.

‘(11) Thanks to him, the Catholic peers have entered in fair numbers into the Upper House of Parliament, with rights equal to those of the Protestant members, the like of which has not been known since the reign of Elizabeth.

‘(12) In the ports of the United Kingdom Catholics are no longer, as formerly, obliged to submit on entering or leaving the kingdom to the humiliating oath of fidelity.

‘(13) Among the royal troops of the City of London, some thirty Catholics having refused to take the accustomed oath, on the ground that it was contrary to their consciences, the oath was modified in their favour, so that now it only speaks of fidelity to the king, and says nothing about the Pope, as the legal formula requires.

‘(14) In various parts of the kingdom and at the Court he has raised several Catholics to positions of high dignity and much confidence. There are several Catholics among the guards immediately attached to his person.

‘(15) At the beginning of the present year 1662, when there was an agitation in Parliament for reviving the penal laws against the Catholics, the king cut short the discussion and severely reproached several members of the chamber for desiring to persecute his most faithful subjects and best friends. Such were the terms that this good prince applied to the Catholics.

‘(16) Lastly, by his opposition to the law in virtue of which Catholics, proved to be such, are condemned to forfeit two-thirds of their property, the king deprives his treasury of a considerable revenue. The same is

true with regard to the confiscations and heavy fines which accrue to him whenever a priest is found in a layman's house or a layman is detected assisting at Mass or at any other religious ceremony.

‘Meanwhile it can be fairly objected, on the other side, that this monarch has allowed the introduction of a form of oath or protestation of fidelity of which the sense is hostile to the authority of the Vicar of Christ. But it is only fair to observe that the larger part of the wrong belongs to N. N., who, after having composed and publicly promulgated this form of oath, has persuaded the king that it really in no way wounds a Catholic conscience.’

There can be but little doubt that Alexander VII., thus encouraged by the report of the theologians, would have been quite willing to accede to the request that had been made, and to create D'Aubigny a cardinal ; and the more so as he would have been able by so doing to please not only King Charles II., but also Louis XIV. and Cardinal de Retz, the man to whom, before all others, he owed his own elevation to the pontifical throne. But, unfortunately, there was a difficulty which arose from the personality of D'Aubigny himself. In his youth he had been carried away by the errors of Port-Royal, and had been a declared adherent of Jansenism. From this he was won back by the efforts of M. Olier and the priests of St. Sulpice, and for many years had been considered free from all taint of unorthodoxy. At a later date, however, he had reverted more or less to his earlier opinions, and certain letters of his to Arnauld and others show that he was prepared to go far in that direction.¹ This was known at Rome, and the Pope

¹ *Vie de M. Olier*, vol. ii. p. 238.

felt that it was impossible to put the ecclesiastical affairs of England into such hands lest the result should only be to add a fresh difficulty and danger to those by which Catholicism in England was already so harassed and distressed. There was nothing to be done except to refuse, but the refusal should be couched in language as conciliatory as possible, and so skilfully was this done that Charles at once acknowledged the force of the argument; and, far from breaking off relations with the Holy See, as he had threatened to do in his earlier instructions to his agent, sent his commands to him to proceed at once with the more secret and much more important business which had been entrusted to his care.

This further negotiation, the secret of which was most jealously kept, and was probably not confided to anyone, either in England or Rome, except to the two queens, to Richard Bellings, and to the Pope himself, with perhaps the cardinal-nephew who was acting as secretary of state, had to do with a far more important matter than the mere bestowal of a cardinal's hat. It was nothing less than a formal proposal of a scheme by which, as it seemed to the king, the three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland might be brought back to the obedience of the Holy See. Of this further scheme Clarendon at least knew nothing, and he would undoubtedly have been bitterly opposed to it from every point of view. He had pushed complaisance with his master's wishes as far as he possibly could in assenting to the sale of Dunkirk, and in preferring a request to Rome for the promotion to the cardinalate of the king's cousin. But at this very time, while Bellings was still absent on his mission, he was venturing from his place as Lord Chancellor in the House of

Lords to oppose in every way that he could the proposal of the king to grant liberty of conscience to all his subjects, Nonconformist as well as Catholic. Royalist and Cavalier as he was, he was also bitterly anti-Catholic, and no scheme which favoured reunion with Rome could possibly have found a moment's favour with him. Nor is it likely that on a point on which it was necessary to keep Clarendon in the dark, any other courtier or statesman would have been taken into the king's confidence. At this early stage of the negotiation it would be better for the safety of all concerned, and for the ultimate success of the vast project which was thus initiated, that as few as possible should be entrusted with so dangerous a secret.

The principal documentary matter which Bellings was now instructed to lay before the Pope was a formal profession of faith on the part of the king, intended to serve as the basis of consultation concerning the possibility of a concordat. This document was written originally in Latin, and we give it, on account of its great importance and interest, in its entirety.

'A proposition made on the part of Charles II., King of Great Britain, for the reunion, which is so much to be desired, of his three kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland with the Apostolic and Roman See.

'His Majesty the King, and all those who aspire with him to the unity of the Catholic Church, will accept the profession of faith which Pius IV. compiled from the Council of Trent, and also all the decrees set forth, either in that council or in any other of the general councils, on the subject of faith or morals, and further, all that has been decided by the last two Pontiffs in the matter of Jansenius; only reserving, as is done in France and certain other places, certain

special rights, and certain customs which usage has consecrated in each particular church. They understand these decrees in the sense of all those restrictions which other œcumenical councils, acting in all prudence, and after due consideration, have imported into them, of which the said profession of faith is an example. Whence it follows that nothing which is not contained in these must at any time be imposed either on the king or on any of his Catholic subjects, and that if at any time any of them should express his opinion on any one of these points, he is not to be considered as thereby committing a crime or as favouring heresy. On these conditions his majesty is prepared at once to break with all Protestants and other religious bodies not in union with the Roman Church. Especially, he declares that he detests the deplorable schism and heretical teaching introduced by Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Memnon, Socinius, Brown and other wicked men of like sort, for he knows by bitter experience, and better than anyone else in his dominions, how great are the evils which have been introduced by the so-called Reformation, which ought rather to be called a Deformation. For it has overthrown all settled government, and has introduced Babylonian confusion both in Church and State, so that all three kingdoms, and especially England, have come, in civil matters as well as in ecclesiastical, to be simply the theatre of a series of terrible disturbances enacted before the eyes of the whole world.'

This remarkable declaration of faith on the part of King Charles is followed by a long series of twenty-four 'Notes'; in which is drawn out in considerable detail the plan which it was proposed to follow in the execution of this difficult project, should the Pope see his

way to giving his adhesion. The whole matter had evidently been thought out with considerable care, and a scheme finally arrived at which was thought likely to cause the smallest possible amount of friction or disturbance of vested interests. The existing archbishops and bishops were to remain, on giving in their adhesion to the general plan, but they were to be reconsecrated by three Apostolic Legates sent from Rome for this purpose and for no other. The Archbishop of Canterbury was to be raised to the dignity of Patriarch of the three realms, and the whole administration of the ecclesiastical affairs within those realms was to be centred in him, without any appeal to Rome except in a very few matters, the decision of which was to be specially reserved to the Apostolic See. Even these reserved causes were to be decided within the kingdom by a legate who was to reside in Great Britain and to be chosen from among the native-born subjects of the king. For the further government of the Church, it was provided that provincial synods should be held every year, and a national council was to be summoned at fixed intervals. All the existing local privileges of the Church were to be retained; the king was always to nominate to any episcopal see that might fall vacant; and ecclesiastical property alienated to lay hands in the preceding reigns was in all cases to be secured to the existing holders. Liberty of conscience was to be granted to all, and neither Charles himself, nor any of his successors, were to be bound to treat harshly any of his subjects who preferred to risk their souls by remaining Protestant. All such were to be allowed the free exercise of their religion, though at their own expense, and were to be reclaimed, if possible, to the Church by force of argument without any kind of

coercion. With regard to the smaller details of the settlement, all bishops and clergy who accepted Catholic ordination were not merely to retain their benefices but were to be allowed to keep their wives, celibacy being introduced only for those who should be unmarried, or ordained at a later period. The Holy Eucharist was to be given in both kinds to all who desired it to be so done, and the Mass, though celebrated in Latin, was to be accompanied by English hymns. A summary of Catholic doctrine, carefully drawn up with full proofs from Holy Scripture, was to be published, and Catholic priests in their disputations with Protestants were to be instructed not to lay very great stress on miracles of post-Apostolic date, and in especial not to speak of material fires in connection with the doctrine of purgatory. Seminaries for the clergy were to be instituted as the Council of Trent directs. Some of the religious orders were to be revived, as, for instance, the Benedictines of St. Maur, for the public recitation of the Divine Office; others, again, for the sake of their life of enclosure within the cloister; others, for the care of the sick; even the Jesuits to teach in the schools; but all such religious, whatever might be their order or congregation, were to be subject to the ordinary jurisdiction of the bishops and the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Finally, it was provided that those questions which were most hotly debated, such as the infallibility of the Pope, his superiority over councils, and his right to depose kings, were not to be discussed either in the pulpit, or in printed writings, or in any other way.

Such were the lines on which it seemed to Charles that a reconciliation could be effected, and England brought back to Catholic obedience. The scheme was certainly

skilfully drawn up, and perhaps contained nothing which Rome would have regarded, in theory, as absolutely impossible to concede, but we can see clearly, looking at it in the light of the later events of the reign, how entirely visionary and impracticable it really was. Charles was utterly mistaken in his estimate of the real feelings of the nation, which were intensely Protestant, and bitterly anti-Catholic. No possible scheme for reunion with Rome would have stood the smallest chance of getting a hearing in either House of Parliament, and the attempt, had it been made, would almost certainly have cost Charles his throne, and brought the Stuart dynasty to a rapid close.

How the negotiations really prospered we have no knowledge. The Pope may have understood the state of affairs in England better than Charles himself. Or again, the state of opinion in Rome may have been such as to make it impossible even to discuss the granting of such concessions as those which the king demanded. No information on the point has come down to us, so there is no material on which to form an opinion. The extreme secrecy with which the whole affair was conducted has been successful in effectually concealing its result. All that we know is that the Pope did send an answer to the king, and that Bellings brought it back to England. We know this on the authority of Charles himself, in a letter written by him some five years later to the General of the Jesuits. But what that answer contained and in what terms it was couched we shall never know, unless some day a copy of it is discovered among the secret archives of the Vatican. The original, being too compromising to be preserved, was, in all probability, destroyed by Charles himself, either immediately after he received it, or else

a few years later when the nation had gone mad over the inventions of Titus Oates and the pretended Popish plot. At any rate, no trace of it, or, indeed, of anything connected with Bellings' mission, has been allowed to remain among the English archives.

CHAPTER III

THE STRANGE HISTORY OF JAMES DE LA CLOCHE

AFTER the failure of his attempt at opening negotiations directly with Rome, Charles let things go on for some time without any further effort to bring matters to a crisis. Gradually it was dawning upon him that the matter he had at heart was more difficult and complex than he had at first supposed, and that it wanted more than the mere example of their sovereign to induce the English nation as a whole to change their religion. Things were no longer as they had been in the time of the Tudors and the early days of the Reformation, when *cujus regio, ejus religio* had seemed a possible maxim, not only in Germany, but also in England. The Great Rebellion and the period of the Commonwealth had made men much more ready to resist the sovereign's will when it happened to run counter to any strongly-held tenet of their own, and a change of religion was far more difficult to bring about than it had been in the time of Mary or Elizabeth. Men had grown up in the Reformed religion, and had got used, long since, to the idea that it was possible to have men of varying religious views living side by side, without thereby necessarily endangering the stability of the State. A wholesale conversion of the English nation was now out of the question.

Under these circumstances Charles must by degrees

have come to understand that he must act in this matter alone. But to do so was to run great risk of losing his kingdom, if not his life, for the conversion of the King of England to the Roman Catholic religion was only too likely to lead to armed resistance and rebellion on the part of his subjects. And Charles, however undecided he might be on other matters, was on this one inflexibly decided, that, come what might, he 'had no mind to set forth on his travels again.'

This probability of an armed rebellion made it obviously desirable to be prepared with men and money to resist, and if possible to prevent, any such rising. The difficulty was that he could obtain neither men nor money without Parliament, and Parliament would be against him. There was one course, and one course only, open to him. The great Catholic power of France could help him if it would. Hence it was that in 1664 he made an application to Louis for an alliance; an application of which we know almost nothing except through allusions in later correspondence. But the time for this had not yet come, for Charles had nothing to offer in return for the help that he asked for. There was nothing for it but to wait and hope. Meanwhile a very curious episode, the real story of which is told now for the first time, must engage our attention.

On April 11, 1668, there came to the gates of S. Andrea al Quirinale at Rome, which was at that time being used as the central Jesuit novitiate, a young man who craved admittance as a postulant of the Society. He said that he had come from far; all the way, in fact, from the city of Hamburg in Germany, in order that he might be able to attain

his wish, and he gave his name as James de la Cloche. He had no money at all, and very few clothes, just a change of everything and not much more, for we have an exact inventory of all his possessions in the books of the Society. Also, a singular fact in view of the story he had to tell, he spoke no word of any language but French.

There is still to be seen, in a book belonging to the Jesuits at Rome, entitled *Ingressus Novitiorum ab anno 1631 ad 1675*, a list of the belongings he brought with him on coming to the novitiate, countersigned by himself, 'Giacomo della Cloche manu propria.' It runs as follows :

'James de la Cloche, of the island of Jersey under the King of England, aged twenty-four,¹ came to S. Andrea, April 11, 1668. He had with him a hat, a mantlet and priest's dress of silk, a doublet and breeches of black stuff, under waistcoat (*camiciuola*) of yellow skin, a leather sword-belt of the colour of musk, a pair of white silk stockings, two shirts and an over-shirt, a pair of underbreeches and stockings of thread, three handkerchiefs and a cap of white linen, two pairs of shoes, three collars, three pairs of cuffs, a pair of gloves, a hair brush, a pair of boots, two pairs of thread buttons to fasten the collar.'

It was hardly the outfit of a young man of quality, or of a very imposing postulant, and we may suppose that the Jesuit authorities at first received him with a certain amount of reserve.

¹ This age does not fit with the story he told. As it was in 1646 that Charles was in Jersey, de la Cloche could not, had the story been true, been more than twenty-one years of age in 1668. Perhaps he was really much older, and dared not, for fear of discrediting his story, claim to be less than twenty-four.

All doubt as to his desirability as a postulant was, however, removed at once when the young man proceeded, probably under a strict promise of secrecy, to show to the Superiors the papers he had brought with him as proofs of his identity and good faith. These were indeed of a startling character, and, we may be sure, sent a thrill of excitement through the good religious to whom they were now disclosed. There can be no doubt they were all forgeries, but they must have been skilfully executed, since they not only completely deceived the Jesuit authorities at the time, but have also till now been received as genuine without question by every historian of modern times.

The first in order of these documents professed to be a statement by King Charles II. of England, written in French on parchment with his own hand and sealed with his private seal, acknowledging that the bearer was his own natural son, and was by his command living *incognito* and passing under the name of James de la Cloche du Bourg de Jersey. This secret was not to be divulged until after the king's death, but then this declaration might be presented to Parliament. It had been written in French and not in English, in order that there might be no need for the young man to show it to any one to get it interpreted to him. The document was dated Whitehall, September 27, 1665, a date, by the way, when, as a matter of fact, the Court was not in London.

The second document, also written and sealed by the King's own hand, was dated somewhat more than a year later, February 7, 1667. It set forth that, inasmuch as it had been represented to the king by his son, Mr. James de la Cloche, that Parliament might be unwilling, after his death, to recognise his son,

and that the said son might in consequence fall into poverty, the king thought it right to assign and leave him a charge on his dominions, subject to the confirmation of Parliament and of his heir, to the amount of £500 per annum. This sum, however, was to be forfeited unless he conformed to the condition of residing in London and remained faithful to the religion of his fathers by observing the English liturgy.

Lastly, there was a third document, written in Latin, and purporting to be signed by another great personage, Christina, the dethroned Queen of Sweden, who was at this time living at Hamburg as a Catholic, and alternately scandalising and edifying Europe by her piety and eccentricities. This was a certificate to the effect that the bearer, James Stuart, known as James de la Cloche du Bourg, was born in Jersey, and was the natural son of Charles II., who had acknowledged him as such privately to the writer of the certificate. He had been brought up in the Calvinistic sect, but had renounced his heresy and joined himself to the Holy Roman Church at Hamburg on the 26th July, 1667. Under these extraordinary circumstances the queen had felt it right to take the unusual course of giving him this certificate signed with her own hand, in order that he might be able to open his mind to his director in confession and seek counsel for the salvation of his soul.

This remarkable series of documents, which on the face of them are certainly not above suspicion, can hardly have been forged for the purpose for which they were now being used, merely in order to induce the Jesuits to receive de la Cloche as a postulant. In all probability they belong to some earlier escapade

at Hamburg or elsewhere, about which we have no information. Possibly, indeed, they may provide a hint as to the motives which were now leading him to apply to the Jesuits. He may have found it desirable, just on account of these escapades, to disappear for a short time from the public gaze. The novitiate of a religious Order is hardly the place which would be chosen by one who wished to lead a life of comfort and luxury, but it does provide a very safe retreat if a man desires to hide himself for a time from the eyes of the world. Be this as it may, the papers were at once effective in opening the doors of S. Andrea, and the young man found himself forthwith installed as a duly accepted postulant of the Society of Jesus.

It is natural to ask whether there are any means now available of ascertaining who this young man really was, and why he selected this particular line of imposture, in spite of the obvious dangers to which it exposed him in the not unlikely event of detection. Probably we shall never be able to give an altogether satisfactory answer to this question, but the forged papers themselves supply us with a clue which will act as a certain guide to our surmises. In them he describes himself as coming from Jersey, and as being about four-and-twenty years of age. The date and place fit in fairly well with the known history of Charles II. In the year 1646, when he was a youth of only sixteen or thereabouts, Prince Charles, as he then was, actually was residing in Jersey, whither he had come from Holland, charged with a mission to raise assistance in any way he could for his father, who was already hard pressed by the Parliamentary army. While he was there he resided at Elizabeth Castle, and naturally was in constant relations with

the principal residents of the island. Now, beyond all comparison, as Charles himself wrote in 1682 in a letter preserved in the *Actes des États* of the island, the chief family of Jersey at that time was the de Carterets. They had been Seigneurs of St. Ouen in unbroken descent for more than six hundred years, and recently another of the four great Seigneuries, that of Trinity, had come into their hands by marriage. In 1646 Sir George Carteret was Lieutenant-Governor of the island, his cousin, Sir Philip, was Seigneur of St. Ouen, and a third member of the family, Joshua de Carteret, was Seigneur of Trinity.

It is to a daughter of this latter house, whose family place, Trinity Manor, was but three miles from Elizabeth Castle, that popular tradition in Jersey assigns the doubtful honour of being the first to arouse the flames of love in Charles' youthful and too susceptible heart. Marguerite, the only unmarried daughter of the Seigneur of Trinity, was in 1646 about twenty years of age, some four years older than Charles himself. Her picturesque old home was until quite lately untenanted and desolate, but is now once more occupied by the present Seigneur of Trinity. Not many years ago it still possessed a large and valuable portrait of Charles II. by Lely, a gift from the king himself to Marguerite's father. On the lawn there still exists a stone table, connected by tradition with many an entertainment given in honour of the 'Merrie Monarch' during his stay in Jersey. There is no reason whatever for thinking that the matter ever went beyond mere flirtation, certainly none for asserting that the lady's honour was affected, or that a child was born as a result of the affair. The registers of Trinity Church contain no entry of the baptism of

any such child, nor does local tradition assert anything of the kind. On the contrary, in 1656, Marguerite, then in her thirty-first year, was honourably married to Jean la Cloche, son of the Rev. Étienne la Cloche, rector of St. Ouen; her husband always after this marriage calling himself 'de la Cloche,' whereas his ancestors had been known as 'la Cloche' simply. She lived to a great age and died in 1713.

When we consider the fact that this name of 'de la Cloche' was precisely that which was adopted by our would-be Jesuit novice who was claiming to be the son of Charles II. (though the age he claimed to be of itself put such a parentage out of the question, for Charles himself in 1668 was not yet forty years of age, and could not possibly have had a son who was already twenty-four), we can scarcely doubt that this one detail of his story was true, and that he did really come from Jersey. The facts we have stated about the de Carterets would have been known in 1668 only to a very small circle, and we may therefore conclude further that he must have been in some way connected with that family, possibly only as a servant of the house. His knowledge of their story will have suggested to him the idea of trying to pass himself off as Charles' son, and also the *alias* of 'de la Cloche' under which he was wont to pass. Besides this he must have been at some time in London, and have enjoyed opportunities of learning things about the Court, and about the conditions under which Catholics were living, which were by no means altogether public property. While it is the limitations of his knowledge which enable us to say with certainty that he was an impostor using forged documents, the fact that he knew as much as he did probably stood him in good

stead with the Jesuits then, as it certainly has done with historians since, and led to his most imaginative statements being accepted for literal truth.

Once admitted inside the walls of S. Andrea he seems to have settled down to a life of piety, at any rate externally. Not very much knowledge of the deeper mysteries of Catholicism would be expected from one who represented himself as so recent a convert from Calvinism, but he must have seemed to be in earnest and desirous of leading a good life, and have submitted himself obediently to the rules and regulations of the house, or the Jesuits would never have kept him amongst them, king's son though they believed him to be. But before very long he seems to have tired of the life and determined to give himself a holiday, at least for a time. There was nothing to prevent his going away altogether. He was perfectly free to go, for as far as we know he was still only a postulant, there is no reason to think he had actually entered the novitiate. But if he left in this way he would go out as penniless as he had come in, and this was not at all what he desired. He preferred rather to travel for a while at the expense of the Jesuits, and to have their house as a safe retreat to which at any time, when so minded, he could return. Accordingly he set his mind to work to plan the perpetration of fresh frauds, on the same lines as those which had already stood him in such good stead.

How he managed to work out his plan under all the restrictions by which he was necessarily surrounded as a Jesuit postulant, it is very hard to understand. Perhaps he had confederates outside, and the whole scheme was planned in detail before he ever came to S. Andrea at all. Be that as it may,

all that we know for certain is that one day in August, when James had been at S. Andrea about four months, two letters were delivered, doubtless under conditions of great secrecy, to the General of the Jesuits. Both letters purported to come from, and to be written by the hand of the King of England. One was addressed to the General himself, and the other to 'our most honourable son the Prince Stuart, living among the Reverend Fathers of Jesus under the name of Signor de la Cloche at Rome.' The address alone was sufficient to stamp it as a forgery to any one who knew English customs well, for there is no instance of the illegitimate son of an English king being given the title of Prince, even on informal occasions. Both letters are extremely long.

The letter to the General begins with excuses for being written in French. The king's Latin is too rusty, and he is determined not to trust to any other person the great secrets which this letter is going to disclose. However, he is sure that so eminent a person as the General of the Jesuits is sure to know French. The letter, of course, had to be in French, because French was the only language that James de la Cloche, its probable author, knew. Some excuse had to be found, and this was the best available at the moment. This necessary preamble over, the letter went on to make startling disclosures in Charles' name. The king, it said, was, and had long been, at heart a Catholic. Yet was he in a miserable position, for he dared not make the fact known. Under these circumstances he had long prayed that some one person might be given him to whom he could freely and unreservedly open his mind, without thereby leading his Court to guess that he was a Catholic. True, there

were priests at St. James' and at Somerset House in the service of the queens, and others in various parts of London, but he dared not have an interview with any of them, even if they were disguised, for that would soon lead to the secret being discovered. Under these circumstances it seems to him to be providential that his son should have become a Catholic, for however lacking he may be in experience, he will at least be capable of administering the sacraments of confession and communion which it is the king's desire to receive frequently.

'This son,' the letter continues, 'is a young cavalier whom you have admitted into your society in Rome, under the name of de la Cloche de Jersey. He was born when we were not much more than sixteen or seventeen years old, of one of the most distinguished young ladies in our realms, more through our youthful frailty than deliberate wickedness.' The secret of his birth is known to no one in London except the two queens, and he is very dear to the king; all the more so now that he has become a Catholic, for he is sure from his knowledge of his character that he has done so with reason, judgment, and knowledge.

Great care is to be exercised about answering the letter. The answer must not come from Rome, or great trouble will follow. Nor must Queen Christina be trusted, for prudent as she is, still she is a woman, and that is enough to make the king feel sure she cannot keep a secret. If she asks about the young man she is to be told he has gone as a missionary to Jersey or anywhere else. Meanwhile let the youth go to Paris, or perhaps to London, and be secretly ordained. The king desires much to see him, not to dissuade him from becoming a Jesuit priest, but to embrace

him. He can live with the Jesuits while in England, but not in London, and afterwards will be allowed to return to Rome and to the novitiate.

With this letter there was enclosed a second, addressed, as we have said, to 'the Prince Stuart,' but written, of course, solely for the purpose of being shown to the Jesuits and of increasing their opinion of his importance. It repeats the caution already given in the letter to the General that no answer must be sent to the king. Obviously the game would have been altogether destroyed had an answer been sent to Charles, for the king would, of course, have replied that he knew nothing of the whole affair. But, in his desire to magnify his own importance, the young man went very near to giving the plot away. Any one who really knew the conditions of the English Constitution would have found it very hard to believe that this letter could ever have been written by an English king.

It begins by saying that the queens (that is, Henrietta Maria, the queen-mother, and Catherine, the queen-consort) were most anxious to see James, for they have been told that he has embraced the Catholic religion. They have advised the king to write that no hindrance will be put in the way of his becoming a Jesuit, and that, indeed, Charles hopes he may continue as such all his life. At the same time, the letter goes on to say, he should consider his health. He has never seemed to the king to be very strong, and after all one can be a good Catholic without becoming a religious. He should weigh also, before he takes a final step, how brilliant a prospect he is giving up. Not only has the king always had the intention of publicly recognising him as his son,

whenever political conditions should make such a step possible, and of giving him titles and position such as are already enjoyed by his brother Monmouth, but even higher destinies may be in store for him. Then follows an amazing statement, which ought, one would have thought, to have led to suspicion of the *bona fides* of the writer. 'If liberty of conscience and the Catholic religion are restored in this country, you might even have hope of the crown, for we can assure you that if God permits us and our honoured brother the Duke of York to die without issue, the kingdom falls to you, and Parliament cannot lawfully oppose it, except on the ground that liberty of conscience is not restored, and that, therefore, you as a Catholic cannot succeed, since all kings must, as at present, be Protestants.'¹

There followed a hint that some day, after seeing his son and talking it over with him, the king might perhaps write to the Pope suggesting that a Cardinal's hat should be given, and also a note that he had already written to the Queen of Sweden to ask her to pretend to know nothing about his story if she was asked. The letter closed with a promise to do some generous act to help the Jesuits, if James determined to remain with them. But there was no hurry about that. The king would discuss the matter with his son when they met in London.

We can imagine that the importance of James de la Cloche in the eyes of Oliva, who was at this time the General, must have been very materially increased by these letters, of whose genuineness he seems to have entertained no doubt. Both letters had said

¹ James de la Cloche here forestalls history. The law requiring the Sovereign to be a Protestant was not passed till 1689.

that there was no need for haste, but that the spring would be soon enough for the young man to come to England. So, since an answer had been so strongly forbidden, there was nothing to be done immediately, except that presumably the young man's admission to the novitiate would be deferred, in view of the journey he was to make. But before the month of August was out, a piece of news reached the ears of our postulant which rendered further action immediately necessary. This was that the Queen of Sweden was coming to Rome and already on her way. Disaster might so easily come upon him if she actually arrived there before his own departure, that it became necessary to expedite matters. A fresh letter, therefore, must arrive without delay from the King of England, and this, accordingly, was just what happened. This new letter explained that Charles, too, had heard of Christina's movements, and was in fear that her indiscretion might lead to complications. So he had at once written to her saying that his son had already left Rome, and had gone to Paris on his way to England, for the purpose of making some financial settlements before finally entering the Society. Hence it was urgently necessary that the youth should start at the earliest possible moment, and that every precaution should be taken to ensure the most absolute secrecy. He had better come by France, but nothing must be said to the royalties there, not even to the Duchess of Orleans, the king's sister. The General is not to send any answer, except by the hands of de la Cloche, lest the secret get out, and he is implored to overrule the young man's own objections (for the king well knows how he hates England), by representing the great need his father has of his presence.

This letter no doubt hurried matters on, and preparations were made for James' start. Then he made another disturbing discovery. He was not, as he had fondly hoped, to be allowed to travel alone, but a Jesuit father was told off to go with him and to act as *socius*. Such a possibility had never occurred to him, and it was obviously a fatal blow to all his intentions of having a good time on the Jesuits' money. But he was not yet at the end of his resources. The same plan which had succeeded so extraordinarily well so far could avert even this disaster. So, hot-foot on the track of the last, came yet another letter from the king. Charles has heard, the queens have told him, of this custom of the Jesuits, that they do not let their younger members travel unaccompanied. So he writes in the utmost haste to say that this must not be. He has already told the Queen of Sweden that he is travelling alone. Besides there would be great risk if a Jesuit came with him. Such a one might be recognised as an Italian by his speech or otherwise, and that would be disastrous. But in any case, even if one who is not Italian could be sent, the king, for good reasons, which he omits to give, utterly forbids him to land in his dominions. The young man must come alone, and must not see or write to any one while he is in England. Let him go to Genoa to the Jesuits there, and there change his dress. After that he is to go on board an English ship, great care being taken that no one on board knows that he has any connection with the Jesuits, and to pass under the name of Henri de Rohan, which is the family name of a certain French Calvinistic prince with whom the king is on intimate terms. All arrangements have already been made, and a careful watch will be kept

on all ships coming to England, which can easily be done 'under colour of zeal for the welfare of the realm, and under the pretext of maintaining the Protestant religion, to which we feign ourselves to be more and more attached, although before God, Who sees the hearts, we abhor it as utterly false and pernicious.' No fear need be entertained as to the danger of the voyage, for the king 'has consulted physicians about the effect of sea-sickness on persons of weak constitution, and has been assured that sea-sickness never yet killed any one, but is, on the contrary, very often beneficial to the health.' Once more let the General understand that his religious vocation is in no danger. 'So far from hindering him from fulfilling his vocation either in the Catholic religion or in your Company, we and the queens will press it upon him more urgently than any director he could possibly have.'

This last letter is endorsed on the back with a note in Oliva's own handwriting, which seems to be the draft of the reply to the king which James carried with him. It is, therefore, quite certain that Oliva was entirely deceived. The note is dated from Leghorn, October 14, 1668, so it was presumably from that port and on that day that the start was made. After all, as we gather from later correspondence, he was not allowed to go alone. A Jesuit father accompanied him for the first part of his journey, but seems to have been left in Paris, while from that point James went on alone. Whither he went we do not know, but we may be sure he never got to England, but spent his time as agreeably as he could somewhere in France, or perhaps in Jersey, until such time as the money which had been given him for his journey

was all exhausted. Unfortunately this was very soon the case. There would have been no need to give him much money for so short a journey as that from Paris to London. Nothing remained for him, therefore, but to return and get some more.

Accordingly, he came back to Paris, picked up there the Jesuit father he had left behind, and started with him on his journey back to Rome. Of course he had a fresh letter from Charles, dated November 18, 1668, to account for this action, and to prepare the way for future raids on the Jesuit exchequer. This letter explained that he was returning of his own free will, and at his own request in order that he might act as ambassador in an exceedingly important and secret matter between the king and the General of the Jesuits, which he will explain by word of mouth. It mentions, too, that the king, having heard from his son that the buildings at S. Andrea are in need of additions and, moreover, already encumbered with debt, hopes before very long, within the year at latest, to send a considerable sum of money for this purpose. Meanwhile will the General be kind enough to defray all expenses which may be necessary, all of which shall be repaid to him, and to send as soon as possible, by James himself in person and by no one else, the answer to the question propounded ?

With this letter the history of James de la Cloche, so far as the Society of Jesus is concerned, comes to an abrupt termination. We see that he must have arrived at Rome, probably in the early days of December 1668, because this letter which he brought, and which is dated November 18, is in the Jesuit archives. But from this time onwards he makes no appearance of any kind in the records of the Society.

Our further knowledge of his movements is derived from other sources. From them we may guess that he only remained in Rome for a very short time, and then started off again for England, probably again in company with a Jesuit father.

For just at this juncture there arrived at Naples two travellers of condition. The one was, or gave himself out to be, a knight of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem. The other, who was younger, passed as an Englishman, although he could speak only French, and gave no name. This latter said he was ill, and would stay at Naples for a time and go on to England later. The other went on at once, it was said to Malta, but before he went he showed great solicitude for his young friend's spiritual welfare. He sought out a confessor for him, a canon of the cathedral, and also took some pains about the lodging he was to occupy. It certainly looks very much as if we had here our two friends. James' sickness we may surmise to have been feigned, in order that he might be left behind, while the 'knight of Malta,' who showed such singular solicitude for his soul's good, was presumably no other than the disguised Jesuit father who now found himself, doubtless with much searching of heart, obliged to relinquish his charge, and to hurry on with the answer which they were carrying to the King of England.

Even the most careful precautions lead to disaster if the fates are hostile. It was through the very confessor the good man had selected with so great care that disaster followed in this instance. For it was only a short while after the cavalier had left that his young companion went to lodge at the house of a certain Signor Corona, whose pretty daughter he had

seen and admired at church, and to whom he had been introduced by the confessor himself. We can imagine what would have been the feelings of his late companion had he known what was going on.

Once duly installed in the house of his *inamorata*, love-making began at once on the young man's part. But the lady was coy, and opportunity was hard to find. At last, however, he came upon her unawares in the passage, as she came out of her mother's room, and forthwith he made the offer of his heart and hand. 'Teresa,' he said, for such was the young lady's name, 'will you have me for your husband?' The girl blushed deeply, murmured something to the effect that if God had intended them to marry He would have made their worldly position more equal, and took refuge in flight. Thenceforth she was more unapproachable than ever.

The young man, however, was far from being discouraged, and betook himself to his confessor. From him he got no help at all, but only discouragement, which so offended him that for a time he gave up coming to mass or frequenting the sacraments. Later on he betook himself to another confessor, and to him he explained all the matter, even telling him of his pretended relation to the King of England, and producing in proof of his assertions 'two noble testimonies'; one from the Queen of Sweden, doubtless the document of which we have already spoken, and the other, the point is worth noting, from the General of the Jesuits. Such evidence at once won over the good ecclesiastic, and by his intercession the unwillingness of the lady was soon overcome. A few weeks later James led the fair Teresa to the altar of the Cathedral of Naples, having previously declared himself

before the Archbishop to be a Catholic. The name under which he married her, and which is entered in the Register at the Cathedral, was Jacobo Enrico de Bovere Roano Stuardo.

Trouble began for the newly-married couple almost at once. The young man, who was fairly well supplied with money, desiring that his bride should not come to him quite empty-handed, had given a good deal to his father-in-law, to serve as her dowry, and Corona seems to have been rash in talking about his rich son-in-law and showing the money. People began to gossip, and to say that there was something very strange about this rich Englishman who travelled incognito and had married Corona's daughter; and the upshot of it all was that it came to the ears of Don Pedro, the Spanish viceroy of Naples, and that he sent to have the young man arrested on suspicion of being a coiner of false money. On searching his effects they found in his boxes a large sum of money, a number of jewels, and some letters addressed to himself with the title of 'Highness.' The young man himself, too, now made the claim that he was the natural son of the King of England, and begged that the General of the Jesuits might be written to, and asked to vouch for his identity.

The viceroy was puzzled. On the one hand, this young man might be what he claimed to be. On the other hand, he could speak no word of English, had no papers which were sufficient to prove his identity, nor did any of the English in Naples, not even the consul, Mr. Browne, know anything whatever as to the existence of any such son of Charles II. We have no record of the fact, but it seems extremely probable that he did communicate with the General, and that

the reply he received was satisfactory, for, though he thought it wise to detain him in custody, he sent him to Gaeta with orders that he should be treated honourably, as befitted a king's son, and provided liberally for his maintenance. But he was still so far in doubt, that he sent a letter to Charles himself to find out how matters really stood. Meanwhile, as may be imagined, the whole affair was discussed with the greatest gusto by the 'nation,' as the English colony at Rome and Naples was pleased to call itself, and opinion was fairly evenly divided as to whether in the event the young man would prove to be 'or prince or cheate.'

The letter from the King of England was received after some six or seven weeks, arriving about the first week in June. In it, so the viceroy gave out, Charles denied that the young man was anything to him at all, and altogether disowned him. In consequence the rumour ran through the city that he would be brought to Naples on the morrow and whipped at the cart's-tail as a common impostor, for daring thus to mix himself up with the sacred names of royalty. But this charitable hope was doomed to disappointment. He was brought to Naples, indeed, and cast into the Vicaria, the common prison; but after an imprisonment of a single day was set at liberty and allowed to return to his wife and the Corona family. Men said that this unexpected leniency was due to interest that had been made by his wife's relations through the wife of the viceroy. A more probable surmise would be that the viceroy was so much impressed by the reply of the General of the Jesuits that even Charles' answer did not wholly convince him that there was nothing in the young man's claims.

He would naturally think it best not to punish him, especially as he had really committed no crime.

The liberated prisoner did not stay long in Naples. He left almost at once for France, saying that he was going to visit his mother. After an absence of two months he returned, giving out that his mother was dead, and that he had now a sum of 50,000 pistoles, rather more, that is, than the same number of pounds sterling, at his command. He intended, he said, to remove himself and all his new relations away from Naples, where he had been treated so badly, and to go to Venice; but he was unable to carry out his plans, for he fell ill of fever and died the next month. He made a most edifying end, protested to the last that the account he had given of himself was true in every detail, received the last consolations of the Church with the utmost piety, and left behind him a will disposing of his property, drawn up and signed on his death-bed.

This will, when opened and read, proved to be of a most astonishing character. It is entirely in Italian, a language which the testator did not understand, and is a most magniloquent document. He names his 'cousin' the King of France, executor, and calls upon him to see justice done. He claims to be the illegitimate son of Charles II. by the Lady Mary Henrietta Stuart of the Barons of St. Marzo (Saint-Mars in the contemporary English translation preserved at Venice), a description which does not enable us to identify either her or her family, and which we are safe in assuming to be due solely to his own imagination. He commends his unborn child to his father's care, asking that he may be given, should it prove to be a boy, 'the ordinary principality, either

of Wales or Monmouth, or such other province as is customary to be given to the natural sons of the crown,' of the value of 100,000 scudi. The rest of the legacies are on the same scale. To Corona and his wife and each of their three other children he leaves 50,000 scudi each, to be paid by his Britannic Majesty. To his heirs, male or female as he or they might prove to be, he bequeaths, besides the principality above-mentioned of the value of 100,000 scudi, a further sum of 80,000 scudi annually, being the property of Lady Mary Stuart, his mother, and now belonging to him as her heir. He leaves the King of France not merely executor of his will, but guardian of his children ; and in order to secure the punctual payment of his legacies, which amount in all to 291,000 scudi per annum, he assigns and gives his lands, called the marquissate of Juvignis, which he asserts to be of the yearly value of 300,000 scudi, but which, both as to title and lands, seems to have had no existence outside his own brain. It is a little disappointing, after all this magnificence, to find that he did not leave enough in ready money to pay for his funeral, but had to be buried at the expense of his father-in-law.

'Soe this is the end of that princely cheate, or whatever he was.' That is the way in which the whole story is summed up by Kent, the British agent at Rome, but the imposture dragged itself on sordidly enough, for many long years. The expected child was duly born and proved to be a boy. He was born on November 11, and baptized on December 10 in the church of Santa Sofia, when he was given his father's name of James. Nothing is known about him till the year 1711, when he would be forty-two years of age. According to his own account he went in that year to

Rome, and there married a certain Donna Lucia Minelli della Riccia. Having attracted attention to himself by this marriage, he was, he says, arrested by Pope Clement XI. as a vagabond and impostor, with no claims really to be the prince he represented himself to be. An inquiry was instituted, and the case lasted a whole year, during which he lay in prison. At the end of that time he says he was set free, was admitted to a public audience with the Pope by way of reparation, and presented with an illuminated diploma retailing his descent. He even asserts that he was from that time forward accorded royal honours in Rome, while the documents by which his claim had been triumphantly proved were deposited in the office of the Camera Apostolica, sealed with three seals, and endorsed 'Causa Magna Stuarda.'

Armed with this papal diploma, no doubt as to the validity of his pretensions remained. He stayed, so he tells us, some time longer in Rome, and then went on to Vienna, where he was received with great favour by the Emperor Charles VI., and where he remained for some years. He then made a tour of many German capitals, and was everywhere received with honour. An account of the honours paid him at Cologne in 1724 was printed. The Elector of Bavaria treated him with especial regard.

In 1726 he was at Venice, and here his claims seem once more to have been called in question. A certificate was consequently obtained from Naples, issued by Cardinal Pignatelli, the Archbishop, to the effect that the marriage of his parents 'D. Jacobus Enricus de Boveri Roano Stuardo,' natural son of Charles II., King of England, and 'Teresia Corona Napolitana' had really taken place in the cathedral at

Naples, and that James Stuart was really the posthumous son of that marriage. Having thus once more made good his position, he remained at Venice till 1734, or thereabout, and then moved to Genoa. Here the Archbishop of Naples once more came to his help, and wrote, so he asserts, to the Archbishop of Genoa on his behalf. In spite of the kindness of the archbishop he found himself in great poverty, so much so that in 1741 he writes to Propaganda asking for assistance, giving the account we have quoted of his past life, and enclosing a certificate from his parish priest saying that 'he is now in extreme necessity and obliged to inhabit a small room unprovided with necessaries.' He appeals for help especially on the ground of the great aid he has given to Catholics in England, but does not supply any details to tell us what it was that he had been able to do for them.

If all this story rested on first-rate authority it might go to prove that James de la Cloche was, after all, not wholly an impostor. The trial at Rome and its triumphant issue would go far in his favour, and we might feel ourselves bound to investigate the question whether, although the letters in the Jesuit archives are indubitably forgeries, their forger may not really have been Charles' son. But, unfortunately, the authority is as bad as it can be. It all rests on printed circulars drawn up for begging purposes, and where investigation is possible, the story breaks down at every point. No trace of the *Causa Magna Stuarda*, for instance, seems to exist in the archives of the Vatican.

There are a few papers in the British Museum which carry on the story a little further. The first is a written letter, signed in another and more feeble

hand, *Il Principe Stuardo*, which evidently served as a covering letter to the printed document which accompanied it. This latter is a license to ask alms in the diocese of Naples, signed by the Vicar-General, and giving an account of the petitioner. It begins with his two trump-cards, the undoubtedly genuine certificate of identity given by Cardinal Pignatelli in 1726 from the evidence of the Naples registers, and the sympathetic account of his father's marriage and early death, which may be read in the *Lettere* of Armanni, and is the authority for many of the particulars which we have already given. Vincenzo Armanni, the author of these gossiping 'Letters,' was an Italian gentleman of the period, and was deeply interested in the story of Giacomo Stuardo, in whose good faith he strongly believed. The paper goes on with a long biography, much on the lines of the earlier document from which we have already quoted, but dwelling much less on his triumphant acquittal at Rome and his reception at the various courts which he afterwards visited. The reason for this more modest tone is clear enough, for the old man (he must have been eighty years old when the paper was printed) goes on to tell how, in 1743, he went again to Rome, where so far from being received as a royal personage, he was at once arrested and thrown into prison 'as an impostor and false prince.' After three months' imprisonment he was condemned to be exiled as an impostor, was stripped of his clothes down to his shirt, put in a carriage and driven down to the Ripa Grande. There he was put in an open boat and sent back to Naples, where he arrived in much distress, and would have perished had he not been succoured by his relation, Orsino Galeotti.

This story undoubtedly puts a very different complexion on the affair. Why, if his account of what happened in Rome in 1711 be really true, was he again arrested on setting foot once more in the city in 1743 ? Why was the verdict given in the *Causa Magna Stuarda* not at once appealed to ? Why was an old man of seventy-eight, with royal blood in his veins, treated with such astonishing brutality ? And why, above all, did not the real Stuarts, James III. and the Cardinal of York, who were then living at Rome and possessed of very great influence, do something to aid their unfortunate cousin ? It is something, no doubt, that the story comes to us from his own lips, but it cannot be denied that by it his credit is very greatly diminished. Had the earlier recognitions any real existence, or were they, as well as the *Causa Magna Stuarda*, only the offspring of his own imagination ?

There remains another section of the printed paper to be examined. In it the petitioner states that his father died possessed of the following property, viz. two *palazzi* or town mansions, the one at S. Giovanni à Carbonara, and the other at Capua 'opposite the Jesuits,' and further a deposit in the Bank of Naples of a sum of 500,000 ducats (say £250,000 sterling) sent from London by Charles II. and deposited in the joint names of Carlo Erigio and Francesco Coronari for the benefit of James Henry Stuart. The proofs that this property belongs to him are unfortunately among the papers of which he has been quite recently deprived at Rome. He admits, however, that the two houses are in the occupation of others, and that no rent has been paid for at least forty years. The huge sum at the bank has apparently been lying there untouched and unclaimed for eighty years. Why he did not

claim it while he still had his papers, and while he was living in such abject poverty at Genoa he does not explain. The whole affair has so mythical a sound that we are surprised to find it stated seriously even in a begging letter, and one can hardly help going back in remembrance to 'the Marquisate of Juvignis of an annual value of 300,000 crowns,' to the 50,000 pistoles of ready money which yet were not available for the owner's funeral, and to all the extravagances of the father's will.

A further piece of evidence, hitherto unpublished, may be found in a despatch written by Lionne to the French ambassador in London in the autumn of 1669, mentioning that the General of the Capuchins had been requested by the Corona family to interest the King of France on their behalf in order to obtain payment of the legacies of the soi-disant James Stuart from Charles II. 'I only mention this,' says Lionne, 'that you may have something to make your Court laugh. For myself I marvel that any one should have dared thus to deceive an honest family in the very hour of his death, as if he had not already injured them sufficiently by marrying into their house.'

Altogether the 'Prince Stuart,' as he was fond of styling himself, seems to have been as complete an impostor as his father had been before him. There is the same absolute disregard of truth, if only a lie will serve his immediate purpose better, the same love of claiming imaginary titles and passing himself off as possessed of vast sums of money which are unfortunately not available for his immediate necessities, but there is little trace of the ability and finesse which stood his father in such good stead. James de la Cloche, although he was a scoundrel, was at least an

amusing one ; ‘ the Prince Stuart ’ has not even this redeeming quality. He seems to have died soon after the date of his last begging letter, probably about 1745, and with his death the long imposture came at last to an end. For us the only further interest that the story can have lies in the question, to which we shall presently return, as to the fate of the companion, Jesuit or otherwise, who left James de la Cloche at Naples and hurried on about the business on which he was engaged. As we shall presently see, there is some reason to think that he went on to England and was the bearer of a message which had no small political importance.

CHAPTER IV

THE GREAT SECRET

THE moment in 1668 when James de la Cloche left Rome for England was one of peculiar interest from a Catholic point of view. The Duke of York, who up to that time had been a staunch Anglican, and had therefore been kept entirely in the dark with regard to his brother's schemes for catholicising England, now became converted to the Catholic faith. Exact dates are difficult to give, for our only real authority is James' own autobiography, the original of which, long preserved at the Scots' College in Paris, perished in the French Revolution. At present we only have it at second hand, and in a form the authenticity of which is not always quite above suspicion, in the edition published by the Rev. J. S. Clarke in 1816, from a copy which survived among the Stuart papers.

Many causes contributed to James' change of religious opinion, but his brother's influence was not among them. He had read a treatise by an English bishop, sent him by the author, in which the arguments for the Anglican position were duly set forth; but the effect upon his mind, as not uncommonly happens in similar cases, was the exact opposite of that which was intended. Another influence was, no doubt, the conversion of Turenne, his great hero, which took place about this time, and can scarcely have failed to affect him deeply. His wife's influence again—she died a Catholic a year or two later—will have been all in this

direction, although James appears to have actually made up his mind the earlier of the two.

Whatever may have been the causes, proximate and remote, of his change of thought, his doubts became so serious that he sent for a priest, a Jesuit named Lobbs, who passed under the name of Symons ; and after a few talks with him, became clear that he could no longer, consistently with the safety of his soul, remain a member of the Anglican Church. He came, accordingly, to tell this to the king, and learnt with surprise, so little had he been allowed to share in what was passing in Charles' mind, that he also was of the same way of thinking.

The characters of the brothers were in some points strangely dissimilar. Lord Clarendon summed both up very brilliantly, when he said of them that ' Charles could if he would, but James would if he could.' In nothing is the difference more marked than in their dealings with the Catholic Church. That Charles could have become a Catholic, if only he would, was true of him at any time after the battle of Worcester, if not before, but he lacked the will to face the inevitable results of doing his duty. James was much longer in being convinced ; but the moment he saw his way clear his decision was taken, and he resolved that, whatever the result might prove to be, he would be a Catholic if he could. That resolve, honourable to himself as it undoubtedly was, lost the crown of England to the Stuart dynasty, brought untold disaster upon Catholics in England, and almost plunged the country into the horrors of civil war.

Charles, slowly as he was content to work, had never given up the idea of eventually carrying out his design of becoming a Catholic king. When his negotiations with Rome had fallen through, and he had

come to understand that no scheme of 'corporate reunion' was within the field of practical politics, he fell back upon an earlier idea. He saw clearly enough that the announcement of his conversion was likely to lead to disturbances, quite possibly to armed rebellion. At the best it was almost certain that Parliament would, for a time at least, cut off supplies. Only one way seemed open whereby he could secure himself against these dangers, and that lay in the active support of France. If Louis XIV. could be induced, in the event of difficulties occurring, to guarantee money, and, if necessary, military support, Parliament need not be summoned, the danger would be indefinitely lessened, and Charles would be almost sure of being able to attain his end.

Negotiations in this direction had been begun at the very commencement of Charles' reign, in connection with the search for a Catholic bride. They had been conducted through Foucquet, then at the height of his power in France, but had come to nothing, nor do we know exactly what was then proposed. In 1664 the matter came up again, but once more without result, probably, as has already been said, because Charles had nothing to offer. Louis XIV. was, no doubt, after his own peculiar fashion, a strong Catholic, and would have liked to see England once more under a Catholic king, but he was not prepared to do much in order to bring this about. The one thing he cared for was *la gloire*, the political advancement of France and the increase of her power in Europe; and that, in 1664, Charles could do little to forward. In the glory of God he took, no doubt, a certain and definite interest, but it came altogether second in his mind to the glory of the King of France. Now, at last, in 1668, Charles' opportunity had come. There were at

least two matters in which the support of England was of vital importance to the success of Louis' schemes. These were the question of the Spanish succession and the humiliation of Holland; and in each matter Charles' inclination went with Louis' need. He had, therefore, once more put out feelers, and this time Louis had unmistakably nibbled at the bait. Ruvigny, probably as being too strong a Protestant, had been recalled, and in his place Colbert de Croissy, brother of the great J. B. Colbert, Foucquet's successor in the Ministry of Finance, had come to England as French ambassador. Matters were all prepared for the delicate negotiations to be commenced which sooner or later would bring about what Charles desired.

James' conversion just at this juncture was, therefore, a rather uncomfortable fact. For James was not like Charles, willing to wait indefinitely until the opportunity for action came along. In the first fervour of his conversion he was unwilling to put off his reception into the Church a day longer than was necessary, and yet it was clear that a publicly acknowledged conversion just at that particular moment would render all Charles' plans nugatory, and precipitate the resistance he feared before he was prepared to meet it.

The duke suggested a compromise. Every one knew, he said, that the Pope could grant a dispensation whereby he could be received privately, and yet in public go on appearing as a member of the Church of England, until a fitting opportunity occurred for making his conversion public. 'All the Church of England doctors,' he said, 'believed or at least said that such dispensations were constantly granted,' and it was not to be supposed if this were so, that one would be refused in such a case as this. He put the matter to Father Symons, who, of course, would have

none of it, 'insisting that even the Pope himself had not the power to grant such a dispensation, for it was an unalterable law of the Catholick Church not to do ill that good might follow.'¹ James, however, declined to believe him, and determined, probably with the king's consent, to write directly to Rome, in order to clear up the question. Surely, he said, it could not be that 'all the Church of England doctors' were wrong upon such a simple point as this. Far more likely was it that Father Symons was over-scrupulous, and was putting needless difficulties in the way. No doubt a petition urged by such august authority would be given due weight at the Vatican and a dispensation would now be granted which would solve all the difficulties of the position.

So we see that, by a singular fortune, the return of de la Cloche to Rome with his forged letter from Charles II. must have coincided almost exactly with the arrival of a real inquiry from the Duke of York. One can see at once how greatly this must have added to his credit with the ecclesiastical authorities, and it is small wonder that he should, under these circumstances, have been completely trusted.

The journey from London to Rome would take about three weeks in each direction, so that the answer to the Duke of York's question might be expected in about two months, supposing that no great difficulties were met with on the way, and no unreasonable delay imposed at Rome. We have no information as to the exact date at which the letter was sent, but, on this calculation, the coincidence of time with James de la Cloche's return must have been very close indeed. For, whoever may have

¹ Macpherson, *Original Papers, containing the Secret History of Great Britain*, vol. i. p. 130. Clarke, i. 441.

brought it, it is quite clear that an answer of some kind did arrive, and that it reached England some time about the middle of January. This is proved by the fact that on January 25, 1669, a most important meeting was held in the Duke of York's lodgings at St. James's Palace, to which there were invited, besides the king and the duke, three of the most trusted of the king's advisers—Lord Arlington, Lord Arundell of Wardour, and Sir Thomas Clifford. At this meeting the king for the first time broke silence, and told these chosen few what were his plans for the future. The idea of a private reception had already been given up, and Charles had resolved to make without delay a public acknowledgment of his faith. Our authority for what passed is James' Autobiography. The king told them 'how uneasy it was to him not to profess the faith he believed, and said that he had called them together to have their advice about the ways and methods fittest to be taken for the settling of the Catholic religion in his kingdoms, and to consider of the time most proper to declare himself, telling them withal that no time ought to be lost.' He acknowledged that he expected great difficulty in bringing about what he desired, but said that 'he chose rather to undertake it now, when he and his brother were in their full strength and able to undergo any fatigue, than to delay it till they were grown older and less fit to go through with so great a design. This he spake with great earnestness, and even with tears in his eyes, and added that they were to go about it as wise men and good Catholics ought to do.' ¹

The result of this declaration was, that, after a long

¹ *Autobiography of James II.*, quoted in Clarke's *Life of James II.*, p. 440 *seq.*

debate, it was resolved that France was the only Catholic power from whom the necessary assistance could be obtained, Austria being too weak and too much involved in internal troubles. It was determined, therefore, that an alliance should be sought with France, and, if necessary, that the existing triple alliance with Sweden and Holland should be broken up, and war declared again, with Louis as an ally, against the Dutch.

Charles II. never gave his whole confidence to any single person all through his reign, and even here he made no exception to his general rule. It is quite clear that James and the others thought that in producing this plan they were doing something quite original, and initiating a new policy for England. As a matter of fact, they were only following Charles' guidance, quite unconsciously, and deciding on a policy which he had long before determined upon. Indeed, as we may see from the letters written by the king to 'Madame,' as his sister Henrietta, the Duchess of Orleans, was called in France; at least a week before this meeting took place he had already written to Louis to express in formal terms his desire for a strict alliance.

Dr. Lingard, when discussing Charles' conduct on this occasion, suggests that he was not in earnest, but, 'being the most accomplished dissembler in his dominions,' was deliberately deceiving both Louis of France and the Duke of York. Here he seems to show less than his usual acumen and to misread the character of the king. Charles' desire to become a real Catholic has every mark of reality and sincerity. Had he been so fortunate as to have lived in other times, or in a less prominent position, he would, no doubt, have

been reconciled to the Church, and have lived a much better life within her fold than he actually did outside it. But he knew that to avow his opinions publicly might very possibly mean the loss of his throne, and so he continued a miserable and dissolute life; with a conscience never at ease and without the restraints of religion; condemned to participate, and to feign belief, in the solemn religious acts of a Church with which he had no sympathy and whose ministrations he judged sacrilegious. Now and again he plucked up courage and made an effort, as on this occasion, to free himself from the bonds he found so hateful; nor, though in the event he did not persevere, but fell back into a meaner slavery than ever, is there any reason to doubt that for the moment he was perfectly sincere and deeply in earnest.

Lingard was not in possession of all the facts, and it seems almost certain he was entirely mistaken. Charles was much too clever to place himself in such a position as Lingard imagines, where he would have had everything to lose and nothing to gain. Louis cared comparatively little about Charles' religion, though he cared a great deal about his political support. The bribe—if bribe it was—was thrown away on him. On the other hand, Charles, if his words at this meeting had become generally known, might easily have lost everything. Why should he run such a terrible risk quite needlessly? The friendship of the Northern States was more important, politically speaking, both for Charles and England, than was the alliance with France; and money, if that were his only aim, could be procured from Louis with equal ease as the price of assistance against Holland, without any mention of religion at all. The only key

which makes the situation reasonable is to suppose that Charles, for once in his life, was deadly in earnest, and that his desire to regularise his religious position and to win toleration for his fellow Catholics was the real motive which governed his political action at this period.

Matters, however, developed themselves but slowly. Negotiations were at once begun in earnest between Charles and Louis. Neither Colbert de Croissy, the French ambassador in England, nor Montagu, the English ambassador in France, were allowed to know anything whatever of what was going on. Colbert knew only that Louis desired Charles to be drawn into an alliance with France; and, believing Charles to be unwilling, nearly caused grave complications by trying to stir up domestic difficulties in England in the hope of thus driving him into the arms of France.¹ Montagu knew absolutely nothing at all. The negotiations were carried on in Paris between Lord Arundell of Wardour and Sir Richard Bellings, who were sent over for the purpose to represent Charles, and, on the other hand, Louis himself and Madame. How far Lionne, the French foreign minister, was allowed to enter into it remains uncertain. The Earl of St. Albans, on pretence of visiting Queen Henrietta Maria, who was now living in France, and to whom some said he was secretly married, went backwards and forwards more than once to carry news and messages between Charles and Louis.

One difficulty, and one only, stood in the way of a successful end to these negotiations. Each of the two kings wanted that matter in which he himself was particularly interested to have precedence over the rest

¹ See Mignet, *Documents Inédits*, iii. p. 99.

and to be first put in hand. Each of them had entered upon the discussion with one great object in view, and each was willing, in order to gain that object, to accede to other demands made upon them. Charles was only anxious to declare himself a Catholic, and in order to be able to do so was willing to aid Louis in his attack on Holland. Louis was only anxious to crush Holland and to add her domains, or a large part of them, to France. He could not do this without the help of England, and to get that help he was willing to agree to pay by helping Charles in his religious trouble. But each wanted his own project to have precedence. Charles, stiffened no doubt by the Duke of York, was eager to proclaim his religion at once, and then, when any trouble which might be caused had settled down, he would give his help to Louis against the Dutch. Nothing, on the other hand, would satisfy Louis but an immediate declaration of war against Holland; after which, when peace was made again and victory had been won, he was ready to lend his help to Charles in England. Parliament, he saw perfectly well, would never agree to a war against Holland, once Charles' conversion was announced. So the matter dragged on all through the year 1669 and for the first six months of 1670.

The negotiations were brought at last to a successful close by the influence of Madame herself, who came over to England in June 1670 to visit her brother. Charles came down to Dover to meet her, and with him, ostensibly to pay his respects to his master's sister-in-law, came Colbert, the French ambassador, now for some months admitted to a full knowledge of the whole affair. Unfortunately, at this important moment Charles was without the stronger will of his younger

brother. The Duke of York had remained in London, where some disturbance was expected on account of the Conventicles Bill. In his absence Charles, sick and tired with the long-drawn bargainings, yielded to his sister's persuasions and agreed to let Louis have his way. The treaty was to stand as it was—the clauses about Charles' religion still holding the place of honour, but Charles gave his word more or less definitely that, in practice, the Dutch war should have precedence. With that understanding the treaty was signed, Colbert signing alone as representing Louis, and Arlington, Arundell, and Clifford signing on behalf of Charles. A few days later the formal ratifications were exchanged between the two monarchs. The treaty itself, for greater safety and to preserve the keeping of the secret, was handed to Clifford, and is still preserved among the archives of his descendant, Lord Clifford of Chudleigh. It never took its place among the public records, nor were the other ministers, such as Ashley, Buckingham and Lauderdale, ever informed of what had taken place. A few months later, however, in order to avoid any difficulties upon this score, Buckingham was allowed to negotiate a fresh treaty with Louis, practically identical with this one, except that the clauses relating to Charles' Catholicism were left out. In this way Charles' Protestant ministers were kept in the dark and knew nothing of the real motives which had actuated their king.

The secret clauses, which alone concern us for our present purpose, were as follows:—¹

‘The king of Great Britain, being convinced of the

¹ See the original treaty in Lingard, *Hist.* ix. 505. It was kept secret till 1830, when Lord Clifford allowed Lingard to publish it. Dalrymple had previously published an incorrect draft from French sources.

truth of the Catholic religion, and resolved to make a declaration of it, and to reconcile himself with the Roman Church so soon as the affairs of his kingdom may permit him to do so, has every reason to hope for and promise himself the affection and fidelity of all his subjects, so that none of them, even among those to whom God has not as yet given sufficient grace to lead them to follow this august example and be converted, should ever fail in that inviolable obedience which all peoples owe to their sovereign, even when they are of contrary religions. Nevertheless, since unquiet spirits are sometimes to be found who are especially apt to disturb the public peace when they can do so under the pretext of religion, the king, who has nothing more at heart (after the repose of his conscience) than that his people should continue to enjoy what the gentleness of his government has already given them, has thought that the best means of preventing any change would be to be assured in case of need of the help of his most Christian majesty, who, in order to give the king of Great Britain indubitable proof of the sincerity of his friendship . . . has promised and hereby promises to give for that purpose to the king of Great Britain the sum of two million *livres tournoises* (160,000*l.*), of which half is to be paid three months after the exchange of the ratifications of the present treaty . . . and the other half three months later. Further, the said most Christian king undertakes to assist his majesty of Great Britain with troops to the number of 6,000 footmen if he needs them, and further to raise and support these forces at his own expense, the same being transported by the vessels of the king of Great Britain to any ports or places he may think best for his service, and being subject to the orders of the king of

Great Britain, though paid by the most Christian king. The time of his declaration of Catholicity is left entirely to the choice of the said king of Great Britain.'

Full of the triumph of her successful diplomacy, Henrietta returned to France after the treaty was signed, but, alas ! only to die. Less than a month had passed when the corridors of the palace were ringing with the terrible cry, immortalised for us by the burning words of Bossuet spoken at her funeral—'Madame se meurt ! Madame est morte !' Young, beautiful, and pious though she was, and endowed with her full share of Stuart attractiveness, her life had never been a happy one, and its end was very sad and terribly sudden. The doctors failed to diagnose her malady, and people talked, as they always did in those days, of poison, and even of a jealous husband. For this, however, there does not seem to have been any foundation. The Duke of Orleans had never loved her, nor had he been at all a good husband to her, but of this crowning iniquity he was entirely innocent. Her death, although sudden and mysterious, was no doubt due to natural causes.

To Charles the loss of his sister must have been a terrible blow. She was the person he loved most in all the world, and one of the few really good influences that still remained to him. But her death at once opened up a new danger. To her he had written, during the months of the negotiations, with far more openness than he had shown to any other person. If those letters were now to get into wrong hands, irreparable mischief might easily be done. He wrote off at once to Louis on the subject, and Louis had the letters brought to him. That is how we come now to possess them, for they were placed with the other crown papers

at Versailles. But the letters which had passed since the negotiations had become definite—those written, namely, after June 24 of the preceding year—were destroyed by Louis lest any eye but his should learn the secrets they contained. To us the loss is irreparable, for in them there perished the only source from which we could ever hope to learn the details of the bargaining of that eventful year. After the death of Madame things dragged on slowly enough.

Now that he had actually been brought to the point and the treaty was definitely signed, Charles' vacillating character began to show itself. He shrank from everything which looked like a definite step, and put difficulties in the way whenever Louis pressed action upon him. A fresh hindrance had come to him also in the person of Louise de la K rouaille, a beautiful French girl whom he had seen in the train of his sister when she came to Dover, and for whom he had conceived a guilty passion. He was enough in earnest about his religion to mean to reform his life if once he formally embraced it, and the thought that in that case he must break off this new *liaison* made him all the more inclined to procrastinate and to exaggerate difficulties.

Colbert's letters in 1671 and 1672 are full of his excuses and prevarications. To begin with, he can do nothing, because it is only right that the Pope should be consulted first; then there is a difficulty about choosing a priest to go to Rome on his behalf. Louis suggested the Bishop of Laon as a fitting man, but Charles must have an Englishman to go with him, and cannot find one. Nor, again, is he willing to send to a Pope who is said to be a dying man, but would rather wait till his successor is elected. Then at last, in November 1670, he selects his man—the head of the

English college at Douay, but, now the messenger is chosen, fresh difficulties are raised about his instructions, and when these in turn are settled and brought to him, he turns round and says that the times are not propitious, that he cannot at that moment declare his religion, nor is he prepared to send any messenger to Rome at that precise juncture.

This was in February 1671, and the matter was allowed to rest for more than a year. In March 1672 the king asked that a theologian might be sent over from Paris to instruct him in the Catholic religion, but asked especially that he might be a good chemist; obviously with a view to covering up their interviews under the pretext of chemical experiments, in which he was known to take great interest. To this date, perhaps, rather than to 'the heat of the Popish plot' to which it is given by the narrator, ought we to assign the story in 'Welwood's Memoirs' (p. 146), which runs as follows:—'King Charles had at that time some secret matters to manage by means of a Romish priest then beyond sea, whom he ordered to be privately sent for. And the gentleman employed betwixt the king and him, (from whom I had the story,) was directed to bring him in a disguise to Whitehall. The king and the priest were a considerable time alone together in a closet, and the gentleman attended in the next room. At last the priest came out with all the marks of fright and astonishment in his face; and, having recovered himself a little, he told the gentleman that he had run the greatest risque ever man did; for, while he was with the king, his majesty was suddenly surprised with a fit, accompanied with violent convulsions of his body and contorsions of his face, which lasted for some moments, and when he was going to call out for help,

the king held him by force till it was over, and then bid him not be afraid, for he had been troubled with the like before; the priest adding what a condition he should have been in, considering his religion and the present juncture of affairs, if the king had died in that fit, and nobody in the room with him besides himself.'

This desire to see and consult with a priest looked hopeful, but a month or two later Colbert writes again (June 7, 1672), to say that Charles has put off his conversion, and will do nothing till the end of the campaign. Moreover, he had gone back to his old ideas of ten years before, and was then talking once more of a Uniat Church, with special concessions from Rome in the way of permitting communion under two kinds, and allowing Mass to be said in the vulgar tongue.¹ After this the question was dropped, and nothing more was said upon the subject, about which after all Louis cared but little. For Charles the golden opportunity had passed away, doubts and hesitations had succeeded to his former zeal, and he was only too content to be left alone.

Colbert was too keen an observer to be in any doubt as to the cause. The one and only real difficulty was the evil life that Charles was leading, and from which he could not make up his mind to break away. Other dangers were very evident to the minds of those who shared his secret, but these hardly seemed to weigh at all in the thoughts of the king. 'Ces périls ne peuvent rien néanmoins,' wrote Colbert to Louis, 'sur l'esprit

¹ For all this, see the letters of Colbert de Croissy to Lionne. They are in the *Depôt des Affaires Etrangères: Correspondance Anglaise*, vols. xcv. xcvi. xcvi. c. ci. There are no transcripts of these letters in our own Record Office.

du roy ; mais un peu de libertinage (si j'ose parler ainsi), le fait différer le plus qu'il peut.' ¹

As always happens with irresolute characters, the longer he put things off the more impossible they appeared. 'The slothful man saith, there is a lion in the path.' Meanwhile, all the influence which Louis could bring to bear was exercised in the same direction, urging him to begin the Dutch war, and to leave religious questions to settle themselves afterwards. Indefinite delay was not possible, and at last Charles, who had long been pushing on his preparations with all the secrecy possible, agreed that the war should be actually commenced.

But although Charles, influenced by the motives to which we have alluded, was not altogether unwilling to defer any personal change of religion, he cared too much for the cause he was advocating to relegate its interests altogether to the future. He determined, therefore, to make one more supreme effort to suspend the action of the penal laws of Elizabeth, almost unparalleled among civilised nations for their savage brutality, which still, in spite of the promise he had made at his coronation, and the effort he had made to redeem that promise in 1662, weighed heavily upon his Catholic subjects. The Commons were notoriously bent on intolerance, and the restoration of the bishops to their places in the House of Lords had taken away all hope of a more generous policy finding acceptance in that assembly. The Established Church was supreme, and stood solid for increased persecution. Charles stood practically alone in his kingdom for religious liberty for all his subjects. Under these circumstances, since there was no help to be got from any

¹ May 15, 1670, *Affaires Etrangères : Corr. d'Angleterre*, vol. xcvii.

quarter, he had to act by himself. He would 'essay what could be done of his own royal authority.' The result was the celebrated Declaration of Indulgence issued on March 15, 1672, two days before war was declared against the United Provinces.

It is part of the general lack of justice which has been meted out by Protestant historians to the later Stuarts that so little credit is ever given to Charles for this action. Everyone else is judged by the standard of the twentieth century. 'Bloody Mary' is unhesitatingly condemned for doing what every one in Europe in her time thought she was justified in doing. She would have been held to have sinned grievously against all law, human and divine, had she not acted as she did. Only in 'Utopia' at that period had a licensed division of opinion in matters of religion been dreamt of. But Charles II., who in this matter was two hundred years ahead of his time, and really stood, and stood alone, for religious toleration as we understand it, is represented as being bent on autocratic government and as the destroyer of English liberty, when he tried, with a courage that demands our admiration, to do all that lay in his power to check persecution for religious opinions.

If any one desires to see how sincere was Charles' devotion to the principle of toleration, it is to the Colonies and not to England that we must look. There he could carry his intentions into effect. 'The charters of Rhode Island and Carolina, the instructions to the governors of Jamaica and Virginia, attest the king's tolerant policy.'¹ He was 'in his nature,' to use his words to Parliament, 'an enemy to all severity for religion and conscience, how mistaken soever it be,

¹ *Cambridge Modern History*, v. p. 101. (Professor Firth.)

when it extends to capital and sanguinary punishment.' Noble words, but words which unfortunately roused not the faintest echo in the breasts of the triumphant members of the Established Church before whom they were spoken.

For the moment, though he had not declared his own religion, Charles had attained his object for his fellow-Catholics. If the king himself could not, all other Catholics in England were free, for the time, to worship undisturbed and in security. True, through the bigotry of Bridgeman, the lord chancellor, who refused to affix the great seal on any other condition, Catholics were still not granted what was given to all other nonconformists, the liberty of worshipping in public. Mass might be said in private houses and with closed doors, and that was all. But to men in their condition even that was much. It was a great thing to feel that, for the first time since Elizabeth had put forth the iniquitous laws a hundred years before, now at last no priest in England could be butchered alive for the sole fact of his priesthood, nor could any layman be fined and imprisoned for no other offence than that he had worshipped God in the way that his forefathers before him had done for more than a thousand years. That this was so was due to the action of the king alone, acting in direct opposition to both Houses of Parliament and to the great majority of his subjects.

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CHAPTER V

VIOLENT STORMS AND A HAPPY ENDING

UNFORTUNATELY Charles' great and heroic effort came already too late. Since 1669 the position had really been growing steadily darker, and the chances of a successful issue had become constantly less. Although nothing definite had leaked out about the Treaty of Dover, suspicions had been aroused everywhere ; and suspicions, as so often, had greater effects than would have been produced by actual knowledge. Nothing is so hard to bear as uncertainty.

The Duke of York had, there can be but little doubt, completed his formal submission to the Church very soon after the answer came back from Rome at the beginning of 1669. He did not think it consistent with the safety of his soul, as he himself has told us, to delay this step, and he probably took it in strict privacy at the first practicable moment. There was no need, of course, for him to proclaim the fact, although it was not lawful for him to do anything inconsistent with his Catholicism, so that he could not any longer receive the Anglican sacraments. His absence from England for long periods together, in command of the English fleet, saved him from awkward situations, and for some time no suspicions even were aroused, though before very long events happened, one after another, which set people talking, and gradually brought the nation into a

perfect frenzy of alarm. The first of these was the death of Anne Hyde, the wife of the duke, and daughter of Lord Clarendon. It became known that she had died a Catholic, and had refused the ministrations of the Bishop of Worcester on her deathbed. Then, too, although nothing was certainly known about the king, men knew that something mysterious was going on with France, and these vague suspicions and general consciousness of mystery worked on men's imaginations, and frightened them much more than would any bold assertion of the king's intentions and religious belief.

In December 1672 the Duke of York was at home, and it was evident to the king that if he did not, as was customary, receive the Holy Communion in the Anglican Church on Christmas Day, it would be impossible to keep the fact of his change of religion any longer from the public knowledge. He sent to implore him to make some concession to public polity, but James, as might have been expected by anyone with knowledge of his character, utterly declined to sacrifice his conscience. His absence from the altar was noticed, as the king had foreseen, and was taken as proof positive of the rumours which were spreading everywhere. Parliament was summoned to meet in February 1673. It had become absolutely necessary to summon it, much as Charles disliked the step, for his want of money was fast becoming acute. The expenses of the Dutch war, over and above what Louis was contributing, had to be met somehow, and the other money that Louis had promised could not be claimed until Charles on his side was ready to fulfil his pledge and declare his religion openly. What Charles meant to do was probably to get from Parliament a subsidy, as large as he could obtain, for the expenses of the war and for carrying on the

government of the country. When he had obtained this he intended to dissolve and to govern without a Parliament, declaring his religion, and living for a time, until the storm blew over, on the funds that Louis was to give him. Unfortunately for his plans the favourable moment for such a scheme was already past and gone.

The first act of Parliament was to enter a vigorous protest against the Proclamation of Indulgence which Charles had issued about a year before. Essentially, this was an extended use of the right of pardon which was undoubtedly inherent in the Crown, and consisted in the suspension of all penalties against Catholics and other dissenters for holding their religious services. While not denying the royal prerogative of mercy, Parliament resolved that its exercise in this wholesale manner, amounting as it did to the repeal, at the sole will of the king, of laws on the statute book of the nation, was unconstitutional, and could not be allowed.

Charles fought hard for his Declaration, and actually went down to Parliament himself in person to use all his influence on its behalf. He spoke for it ably and feelingly, and, when he saw that prejudice was still strong against him, went on to attempt to quell the rising storm by personal authority. 'I shall take it very ill,' he told the Commons, 'to receive contradiction in what I have done. And I will deal plainly with you; I am resolved to stick to my Declaration.' The position was an awkward one, for the king's action, though unprecedented on so large a scale, was admittedly in accordance with his rights. If Catholics had been left out of the matter there would have been little opposition, but anti-Catholic bigotry was the life-breath of the Church party. The Commons at length carried by 168 to 116 an utterly illogical resolution, 'That penal

statutes *in matters ecclesiastical* cannot be suspended, but by Act of Parliament,' and followed it up by a respectful petition to the king to allow the laws of the realm once more to take their course.

For Parliament alone Charles cared but little, since they had already voted the requisite supplies for the carrying on of the war. They could now easily be got rid of by the simple process of dissolution. But he found himself face to face with treachery among his ministers. Shaftesbury, now lord chancellor, went over openly to the other side, and Colbert wrote to Louis that Arlington had followed suit. In this he was possibly mistaken, but the story had its effect in France. True to his invariable practice of always subordinating religious to political advantage, Louis wrote to press Charles to abandon the Indulgence, for he feared the loss of his ally. Let him yield for the moment, he wrote, to the popular will, and take up the matter again under the prestige that would accompany the successful close of the war. If he would do that, Louis would help, when the opportunity came, even more decisively than he had already promised to do.

Finding himself utterly alone, opposed not only by Parliament but by his own ministers and his own ally; with even the dissenters, who had benefited by his action, ranged against him through their hatred of popery, and led by his own lord chancellor; Charles yielded to the storm. He went down to the House and withdrew his Declaration. The priest-catcher and the informer, the hangman and the quarterer, the burning of bowels while the victim still lived, and the public exhibition of heads and fragments of slaughtered priests, all the hateful concomitants of the existing penal laws, were once more brought into action. London was

beside itself with joy, and bonfires were lighted all over the town.

The victory, however, was not enough to satisfy the general bigotry, and Parliament went on, doubtless on account of James' absence from the altar the preceding Christmas, to introduce a 'Test Bill'; providing that all who held office under the Crown should receive Holy Communion in the Anglican Church within one month, or at once resign their offices. This Bill passed the Commons just before Easter; in fact, upon Easter Eve, March 29, 1673; and the greatest excitement prevailed in consequence to see whether the duke would or would not present himself with the king for Communion on the following day. Evelyn went on purpose to Whitehall, and was terribly shocked and upset when he found that the duke did not communicate. 'It gave,' he tells us, 'exceeding grief and scandal to the whole nation that the heir of it, and the son of a martyr for the Protestant religion, should thus apostatise. What the consequence of this will be, God only knows, and wise men dread.'

After this scandal the passing of the Test Act followed as a matter of course, feeling running so high that the king dared not refuse his assent. By this Act James, who could not comply with the test required—a test more or less identical with that still required of the sovereign at his accession, though nowadays of no one else—was forced to resign the post of lord high admiral; and the popular alarm was enormously increased when Lord Clifford, the lord high treasurer, was also obliged to refuse to comply, and other lesser folk similarly resigned their posts.

Not unnaturally people lost their heads and began to suspect Jesuit intrigues and Popish plots in all

kinds of unlikely places, a state of mind which was not altered for the better by the news which reached England in October of the same year. This was that the Duke of York, about whom nobody had suspected anything of the kind since he had never left London, had been actually married by proxy on September 20 to Mary, the young daughter of the reigning Duke of Modena; who was, of course, a Catholic. Up to that moment people had comforted themselves with the thought that, even if James should survive his brother, and so there should be a Catholic king once more upon the throne, it could not, in the nature of things, last very long. After him would come his daughter Mary, herself a staunch Protestant, and married to one, like herself, utterly beyond suspicion of any Popish leanings. Now, however, there seemed to be every prospect of a son being born to James by this second wife, 'the Pope's eldest daughter,' as men told each other she really was. The right of such a son to the throne would, of course, take precedence over that of his elder sisters. There would in that case be a Catholic dynasty to reign over a nation at heart almost entirely Protestant.

In the general atmosphere of intrigue and mystery nothing seemed incredible or impossible, and no tale was too far-fetched to find believers. Men went absolutely wild with apprehension, and lost all power of considering evidence or forming a reasonable judgment. The hour produced the man, and Titus Oates and the horrors of the Catholic persecution were the natural and, perhaps, the inevitable result. Charles' chance of openly declaring his religion became more hopelessly remote than at any previous time.

There is no need for us to deal at length with the

terrible and humiliating story of the fictitious 'Popish plot.' The events of that period naturally fill a Catholic writer with an indignation against his countrymen which is almost beyond words; but we need not go to express our feelings beyond the admissions which have been made by the greatest of Whig historians. Shaftesbury is throughout the devil of the piece—one of the most satanic figures in English history. Panic may be some excuse for Englishmen at large, but Shaftesbury did not share in the panic, and deliberately fanned the flames of hatred. Oates' story was only 'a hideous romance resembling rather the dreams of a sick man than any transaction which ever took place in the real world.' Standing alone 'it would not have sufficed to destroy the humblest of those whom he had accused.'¹ Shaftesbury had to supply other witnesses, and he had no difficulty in finding them for a consideration. 'Soon from all the brothels, gambling-houses, and sponging-houses of London false witnesses poured forth to swear away the lives of Roman Catholics.' That he knew their witness to be false and their victims utterly innocent was to Shaftesbury or to Buckingham less than nothing. 'It was a romance which served their turn, and to their seared consciences the death of an innocent man gave no more uneasiness than the death of a partridge.'

At no time in our history had the administration of justice fallen so low or been so shamelessly partial as it was in these years. The judge on the bench indulged in all the onesidedness and far more than the violence of the counsel for the prosecution. 'The juries partook of the feelings then common throughout the nation, and were encouraged by the bench to indulge

¹ Macaulay, *Hist. of England*, chap. ii.

those feelings without restraint. The multitude applauded Oates and his confederates, hooted and pelted the witnesses who appeared on behalf of the accused, and shouted with joy when the verdict of guilty was pronounced. It was in vain that the sufferers appealed to the respectability of their past lives, for the public mind was possessed with the belief that the more conscientious a Papist was the more likely he must be to plot against a Protestant government. It was in vain that, just before the cart passed from under their feet, they resolutely affirmed their innocence, for the general opinion was that a good Papist considered all lies which were serviceable to his Church as not only excusable, but meritorious.' ¹

If it should be thought by anyone that Macaulay's words, Whig though he was, are over strong, a very brief study of the actual records of the 'State Trials' of the period will very soon disabuse him of any such idea. Take, for example, the case of William Atkins, a poor old man of eighty years of age, for six years before that paralysed, bedridden, quite deaf, and nearly speechless. He was accused of high treason, 'for that being a seminary priest he was in the country.' That was all; there was no kind of charge of any overt act, nor was any evidence adduced except to show that he had acted as a priest. Here is the summing up of Lord Chief-Justice Scroggs against him, as given in the official record:—

'L.C.-J.—Look you, gentlemen of the jury. Here is as full and as positive an evidence as can be against the prisoner. The two first witnesses, Wilder and Jarvis, are positive. Wilder swears he heard him say his prayers in an unknown tongue; and, further, says

¹ Macaulay, *Hist. of England*, chap. ii.

that he gave the sacrament to seven or eight according to the manner of the Church of Rome in a wafer at Mrs. Stanford's house in Wolverhampton. Jarvis, the other witness, swears he hath been at confession with him, and hath oftentimes received the sacrament of him. Here are two other honest men that speak very full as to circumstances, so that, in the whole, you cannot have a more clear evidence; and, gentlemen, I must tell you, it is to these sorts of men we owe all the troubles and hazards we are in, the fear of the king's life, the subversion of our government, and the loss of our religion. It is notorious by what they have done, that they are departed from the meekness and simplicity of Christ's doctrine and would bring in a religion of blood and tyranny amongst us. As if God Almighty were some omnipotent mischief that delighted and would be served with the sacrifices of human blood! I need not say more to you, the matter's plain. I think you need not stir from the bar; but do as you will.

'Cl. of Arr.—Is he guilty of the high treason whereof he stands indicted, or not guilty? Jury.—Guilty.

'He received the sentence usual in cases of high treason.'¹

Or, again, take the charge to the jury of the same Chief-Justice Scroggs in the case of Father Ireland, with Pickering and Grove:—

'What shall I judge of these men? when they have licences to lie and indulgences for falsehoods; nay, when they can make him a saint that dies in one, and then pray to him. . . . They eat their God, they kill their king, and saint the murderer. They indulge all sorts of sins and no human bonds can hold them. . . . They have not the principles that we have, therefore

¹ Cobbett, *State Trials*, vii. 726.

they are not to have that common credence which our principles and practices call for.'

Or, again, after the verdict of high treason, a foregone conclusion after his violent oration, was duly found: 'L.C.-J.—You have done, gentlemen, like very good subjects and very good Christians, that is to say, like very good Protestants, and much good may their 30,000 masses do them.'¹

So, one by one, during the slow agony of four dismal years, Catholics passed, wholly innocent though they were of all thought of evil, to the long-drawn horrors of their end; a noble and a venerable band. They were of all ranks and ages—from gentle Thomas Pickering, the Benedictine lay brother, to the provincial of the Jesuits, and to William Howard, Lord Stafford, who was a peer of the realm. And over all alike, with added taunts and savage gibes from the convicting judge, was pronounced the same terrible sentence: 'That you be conveyed from hence to the place from whence you came, and from there be drawn to the place of execution upon hurdles. That you be there hanged by the neck. That you be cut down alive. . . .² That your bowels be taken out and burnt in your view. That your head be severed from your body; that your body be divided into four quarters, and your quarters to be at the disposition of the king. And the God of infinite mercy be merciful to your soul. Amen.'³

During those miserable years, we only now and then get a glimpse of what the king was really thinking. To his Court he took refuge behind the mask of a scepticism that scoffed at all religion; to drown his

¹ Cobbett, *State Trials*, vii. p. 136.

² *Et præcidantur genitalia tua.*

³ *State Trials*, ii. 911.

thoughts he plunged into the one vice that amused him, and he seemed to the world at large to have found all that he desired. He made efforts, more or less feebly, to shield the victims of Oates' and Bedloe's perjuries; but sooner or later always yielded to the storm and signed the warrants for their execution. A refusal in the then temper of the nation would, no doubt, only have led to more extensive bloodshed, and it was probably in this way that he satisfied his conscience, and forced himself to act as he did; but the excuse is, at best, a poor one. Most men imagined that he cared so little about serious things that he could do all this with a light heart as well as a smiling face; but now and again the veil is lifted, and we get a glimpse of his real feelings. Take, as an instance, the pathetic story of the king, when safe from observation in the queen's apartments, going from one to another of the pictures of the five Jesuits who had been put to death, kissing their hands, and saying that he knew they were innocent of the crime which had been laid to their charge, that where they were now they knew that he had only acted under force, and that he trusted he might not be held guilty of their innocent blood.¹

Things brightened for him, no doubt, before the end, and in the strong reaction which followed on the fall of Shaftesbury and the discovery by the nation of the way in which it had been duped, Charles got nearer to his ideal of absolute government than any other English sovereign has ever managed to do. Louis, who all through played callously for his own hand, regardless of the interests of Catholicism, or, indeed, of any interests but his own, had held aloof from

¹ Foley, *Jesuit Records*, xii.

Charles in his time of trouble, and had even gone so far as to suborn the Whig leaders, including Lord Russell and Algernon Sydney, with gifts of French money. Now that Charles' star was again in the ascendant, he gave up this policy, and once more entered into close relations with him. In 1681 a secret agreement was again arrived at, but it was never put into writing, and the precise terms have never been known. It does not seem, however, to have included any provision calling upon Charles to fulfil his promise of 1670 and declare his Catholicism. That he should do so was of no advantage to Louis; nor, from a worldly point of view, were the times even then propitious. Charles drifted on, in the way that by this time had become a second nature, still holding to Catholicism as the one and only true religion, and yet never, even in conversation with his closest friends, making any effort to make his faith effective. The Duke of York, who would have known, one would suppose, if any man did, how matters stood, thought that he had altogether given up religion, and that all desire to be a Catholic had become for him a mere memory of the past. Then suddenly came the crisis, and on February 2, 1685, London was startled with the news that the king was dying.

The Anglican prelates did their duty, and came to Whitehall to exhort Charles and to prepare him for his end. Sancroft and Ken, one after another, did their best to induce him to realise the gravity of his state. Charles listened to all they had to say, said he was sorry for all that he had done amiss, but could not be induced to allow any further ministrations. When pressed to say that he died in the Church of England, he turned away his head, and seemed not to hear or

understand what was being said. A table with bread and wine was brought and put by his bedside, but he could not be persuaded to let the sacrament be administered. 'There was time enough for that,' he said, and when he was pressed again, he said he was too weak to receive it then, and must wait till he felt stronger.

It is a clear proof how completely James was out of touch with his brother's mind, and how entirely he had given up all hope of ever seeing him a Catholic, that these indications passed him quite unheeded. Others outside the sick room were more alert. The queen sent down to the Duchess of York begging that something might be done, but James thought it useless to broach the subject. Père Mansuète, the duke's confessor, sent a message also, but it is not certain that it ever reached him. God works sometimes through strange instruments, and the person who actually was the cause of Charles seeing a priest was no other than Louise de la Kérouaille, Duchess of Portsmouth and paramour of the king.

Barillon, the French ambassador, who had succeeded Colbert, or rather Ruvigny, some years before, finding time hang heavy in the ante-rooms at Whitehall, paid the duchess a visit. He found her overwhelmed with sorrow, but she would not speak of her own grief, for other things were of more pressing importance. She took him into a private room, and told him she was going to let him into 'the greatest secret in all the world,' and that her own head would be in danger if it were known what she was doing. 'The king,' said she, 'is a Catholic at the bottom of his heart and no one is helping him.' She implored Barillon to go at once to the Duke of York, and to beg him to do what he could to save the king's soul. 'Go,' she said,

‘as quickly as you can, for if you delay it will be too late.’

Barillon hurried at once to the duke, and told him what the Duchess of Portsmouth had said to him. James started as if waking from a sleep, and said, ‘You are right: there is no time to lose; I will risk everything rather than fail in my duty on this occasion.’ He went at once into the sick-room, leaving Barillon waiting; but it was by no means easy to find an opportunity to say what he wished, for it is no part of the royal prerogative either to be born or to die in privacy, and the room was full of Protestants.

At last he determined to speak to the king in their presence, but in a low voice. He went to the bed and leant over it, putting his face close to the king. He had to repeat his words two or three times before Charles could catch them, but then the king replied aloud so that all could hear, ‘Yes, with all my heart; with all my heart.’ No one present knew that by those words he was expressing a desire to be reconciled to the Catholic Church before his death.

A fresh difficulty at once presented itself. How was a priest to be obtained, and how could he be brought unrecognised to do his duty at the king’s bedside. Such action by the laws of England would constitute a capital offence—to reconcile a penitent even of low degree with the Catholic Church was to incur the penalties of high treason with all its ghastly concomitants; and though priests, thank God, have seldom proved deficient in courage when duty has called them, it is not every priest who is always ready and eager for a martyr’s death. The duchess’ priests were too well known, and could not fail to be recognised; the queen’s priests were actually in the palace, having come to ask for news, but

they were all Portuguese, and not one of them could speak English. Then someone, probably Count Castel Melhor, suggested Dom John Hudleston, so obviously the proper man for the purpose, and he was sent for at once and came without delay. What happened after his arrival had better be told in the good father's own words :

‘ Upon Thursday, the 5th of February, 1685, between seven and eight o'clock in the evening, I was sent for in haste to the queen's backstairs at Whitehall, and desired to bring with me all things necessary for a dying person ; accordingly I came, and was ordered not to stir from there till further notice. Being then obliged to wait, and not having had time to bring along with me the most holy sacrament of the altar, I was in some anxiety how to procure it. In this conjecture, the Divine Providence so disposing, Father Bento de Lemos, a Portuguese, came thither, and, understanding the circumstances I was in, readily proffered to go to St. James's¹ and bring the most holy sacrament along with him.’

Meanwhile, in the king's bedroom everyone had been asked to withdraw except the Earl of Faversham and the Earl of Bath. Both of these were Protestants, but James thought that he could count on their fidelity and silence. When all was ready the other door was opened and Father Hudleston was shown in. He now once more takes up the narrative.

‘ Soon after Father Bento's departure I was called into the king's bedchamber, where, approaching to the bedside and kneeling down, I in brief presented his majesty with what service I could perform for

That is to the duke's little chapel in the palace. The queen's chapel royal was closed.

God's honour and the happiness of his soul at this last moment on which eternity depends. The king then declared himself that he desired to die in the faith and communion of the Holy Roman Church ; that he was most heartily sorry for all the sins of his life past, and particularly for that he had deferred his reconciliation so long ; that through the merits of Christ's passion he hoped for salvation ; that he was in charity with all the world ; that with all his heart he pardoned his enemies, and desired pardon of all those whom he had any ways offended ; and that if it pleased God to spare him longer life he would amend it, detesting all sin.

'I then advertised his majesty of the benefit and necessity of the sacrament of penance, which advertisement the king, most willingly embracing, made an exact confession of his whole life with exceeding compunction and tenderness of heart, which ended, I desired him, in further sign of repentance and true sorrow for his sins, to say with me this little short act of contrition :

"O, my Lord God, with my whole heart and soul I detest all the sins of my life past for the love of Thee, Whom I love above all things, and I firmly purpose by Thy holy grace never to offend Thee more. Amen, sweet Jesus, amen. Into Thy hands, sweet Jesus, I commend my soul ; mercy, sweet Jesus, mercy."

'This he pronounced with a clear and audible voice, which done and his sacramental penance admitted, I gave him absolution. After some time thus spent I asked his majesty if he did not also desire to have the other sacraments of the Holy Church administered to him. He replied, "By all means ; I

desire to be partaker of all the help and succour necessary and expedient for a Catholic Christian in my condition." I added, "And doth not your majesty also desire to receive the most precious body and blood of our dear Saviour, Jesus Christ, in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist?" His answer was this: "If I am worthy, pray fail not to let me have it." I then told him it would be brought to him very speedily, and desired his majesty that, in the interim, he would give me leave to proceed to the sacrament of extreme unction. He replied, "With all my heart." I then anoyled him, which, as soon as performed, I was called to the door, whither the blessed sacrament was now brought and delivered to me.

'Then returning to the king, I entreated his majesty that he would prepare and dispose himself to receive, at which the king, raising himself, said, "Let me meet my heavenly Lord in a better posture than in my bed"; but I humbly begged his majesty to repose himself; God Almighty, who saw his heart, would accept of his good intentions. The king, then, having again recited the pre-mentioned act of contrition with me, he received the most holy sacrament for his viaticum with all the symptoms of devotion imaginable. The communion being ended, I read the usual prayers, termed the recommendation of the soul, appointed by the Church for Catholics in his condition. After which the king desired the act of contrition, "O my Lord God," &c., to be repeated; this done, for his last spiritual encouragement I said: "Your majesty hath now received the comfort and benefit of all the sacraments that a good Christian, ready to depart out of this world, can have or desire.

Now it rests only that you think upon the death and passion of our dear Saviour, Jesus Christ, of which I present unto you this figure (showing him a crucifix) ; lift up therefore the eyes of your soul, and represent to yourself your sweet Saviour here crucified ; bowing down His head to kiss you ; His arms stretched out to embrace you ; His body and members all bloody and pale with death to redeem you ; and as you see Him dead and fixed upon the Cross for your redemption, so have His remembrance fixed and fresh in your heart ; beseech Him with all humility that His most precious blood may not be shed in vain for you ; and that it will please Him, by the merits of His bitter death and passion, to pardon and forgive you all your offences, and finally to receive your soul into His blessed hands ; and when it shall please Him to take it out of this transitory world, to grant you a joyful resurrection, and an eternal crown of glory in the next ; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.—Amen.”

‘So, recommending his majesty on my knees, with all the transport of devotion I was able, to the Divine mercy and protection, I withdrew out of the chamber.

‘In testimony of all which I have hereunto subscribed my name,

J. HUDLESTON.’

The king did not pass away at once after he had thus received the last sacraments. He lingered on till the next day, apologising, with a whimsical pathos, as all will remember, to those who stood watching around his bed, for keeping them so long waiting and being

‘such an unconscionable time in dying.’ But it was plain even to those, like Burnet, who most strongly disapproved of his action, how great a relief his submission to the Catholic Church had brought to his mind. He wins back for himself, by the dignity and gentleness of his closing hours, much of the respect his character had won from all in his earlier years, but which in later life he had forfeited by his irregular life, his indolence and his timidity. One cannot help feeling that the faults which so mar his reputation were partly the result of his miserable religious position, and that, had he had the courage to follow his conscience in spite of possible consequences at an earlier period of his reign, he would probably have lived a much better life and have been in every way a far happier man. If any are still inclined to form a harsh judgment and to speak unkindly of his actions, it must be admitted that there is no lack of material for censure. It is easy to condemn, and even to despise him for his lack of courage and want of moral fibre, but we ought at the same time to recognise the real difficulties of the position, and perhaps to wonder whether we ourselves, if we had been placed in circumstances as difficult, would have passed through the ordeal so much more creditably than did the king.

BOOK III

THE MYSTERY SOLVED

CHAPTER

I. THE MOCK ASTROLOGER

II. OBJECTIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

CHAPTER I

THE MOCK ASTROLOGER

IF we cast our minds back to the events of the close of the year 1668 it will be remembered that the return of James de la Cloche to Rome, with his forged letter from Charles II., coincided with the arrival of a real letter from James, Duke of York, which came, so far as we know, by the ordinary post, and which asked the question whether the duke might not be allowed to be received privately into the Catholic Church by means of a dispensation from the Pope, and still continue to act in public as an Anglican, by receiving communion in the Anglican Church. It is likely enough that the inquiry was made through the Jesuits, since the priest who was instructing James, Father Symons, was himself a Jesuit, and James could hardly write to the Pope direct. This coincidence must have greatly strengthened the credit of de la Cloche, and nothing would seem more likely than that the two answers, the answer, that is, to the forged letter of Charles and the real letter of James, should both have been entrusted to the hands of Charles' son, as he was believed to be, who was supposed to be already acting as an authorised ambassador from his father. If that were so, when de la Cloche shammed sickness and stayed behind in Naples, his companion and chaperon will have gone on alone with the letters,

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because the matter was too urgent to allow of any delay.

In any case it is quite certain that the answer to James' inquiry must have arrived in England before January 25, 1669. For it was on that day that the great meeting was held in St. James's Palace—when the hope of being privately received was definitely abandoned, and a bolder and more straightforward policy was finally chosen and set in action.

Now it appears from one of Charles' letters to Madame, written on January 20, 1669, that a mysterious messenger actually did arrive at Whitehall on the evening of that day—a messenger who may very well have been the one whom we are trying to trace. 'I had written thus far,' writes the king, 'when I received yours by the Italian whose name and capacity you do not know, and he delivered your letter to me in a passage, where it was so dark as I do not know his face again if I see him; so as the man is likely to succeed, when his recommendation and reception are so suitable to one another.'

In considering this letter and all the letters that follow, it must always be remembered that we are dealing with an intricate negotiation in which no one of the players is laying all his cards upon the table. We have, therefore, always to consider, before we go on to interpret the meaning of any document, how much knowledge was possessed by the writer and the recipient respectively, and what in consequence was the impression that the document was intended to produce. It may be well, therefore, before going further, to pause to consider exactly what amount of knowledge was possessed by each individual at this juncture, in order that we may be able

in each case duly to apply the necessary personal equation.

No one at all in England, except only the king and a single confidant, who may have been Arlington, knew anything as yet of Charles' intentions. The Duke of York and the others were to learn them on January 25, and to be led to think they had to some extent themselves inspired them. In France, Charles' intentions were known to Madame, and in a rather less degree to Louis XIV. Possibly they were also known in some degree to Lionne, the Foreign Secretary, and to Henrietta Maria, the Queen-mother of England. Colbert de Croissy knows nothing, except that his master is anxious to draw England into an alliance against the Dutch. Montagu, the English ambassador in Paris, knows nothing at all—or at most, has a knowledge that a commercial treaty between France and England is on the tapis.

Bearing all this in mind we go back to Charles' letter. 'The Italian' certainly suggests a messenger who came from Italy. We have, then, such a messenger, of whose name and capacity Madame was totally ignorant, and who apparently declined to give her any information, calling upon her on his way to England, and showing such credentials as induced her forthwith to entrust him with an extremely private letter to her brother; a letter so private that it could not be sent in the ordinary way through the post. These credentials, or 'recommendations,' as Charles calls them, were themselves 'dark' and secret, such as would be a source of danger were they made known. Taken in conjunction with the fact that he apparently came from Italy, this suggests either the Pope or the General of the Jesuits as their author. The messenger,

too, is apparently no better known to Charles himself than to his sister.

The date and description fit so well with the missing companion of de la Cloche that we can hardly be considered rash if we assume the identity and consider that we have once more picked up the lost trail. 'The Italian,' this is the important point, turns out to be a priest.

Now that Charles was fully determined to become a Catholic, his immediate need would be for a priest to instruct and receive him. He seems always to have felt clear that for this purpose none of the priests who were living in England could be employed, doubtless because of the danger of their being recognised. So, in the later correspondence between Charles and Louis on this subject, we find that the question of sending a priest from France comes up more than once, and we find, too, Charles stipulating that whoever is sent must have special qualifications, such as being a good chemist, which may enable the king to see him frequently without suspicion being aroused. But, on this occasion, here was a priest, whom none knew or suspected, ready to his hand, and only needing some excuse for his continued presence in England. How should that excuse be manufactured?

Just at this juncture a new play, 'The Mocke Astrologer,' was being acted at the king's playhouse, and attracting a certain amount of notice. Mr. Pepys went to see it, as we learn from his diary, on March 8, but was not very favourably impressed. It was adapted from a comedy of Calderon, 'El Astrologo Fingido,' through a French edition by Thomas Corneille, younger brother of the greater Pierre. The plot is based upon the assumption of the *role* of an

astrologer by a friend of certain lovers whose affairs were going wrong, in order to work upon the superstitions of an obdurate father, and thus extort from him an unwilling assent. The only other point in the play which is important for our purpose is that the lover in question, though supposed to have gone to France, was really lying hidden at a friendly house, hoping that, in accordance with the old proverb, his absence would make his lady's heart grow fonder.

This play seems to have given Charles the idea which was actually carried out. Why should not 'the Italian' pose as an astrologer, sent by the French Court to Charles; or better still, recommended by Monmouth, who had just lately come back from France, and could easily be made to enter thus far into the plot without being told anything more about it? And why, again, should he not lie hid in London, until such time as imaginary letters of introduction could be obtained from France, which he takes to Colbert, posing as a new arrival from that country? He should come in his own character as an ecclesiastic, for priests who dabbled in astrology were not rare in France, and it would make the practice of his religion a simple matter; he should have an Italian name, since he had come from Italy, and it was there that astrology flourished most; and, lastly, since he was a Jesuit, a name just then much suspected in England, and since Benedictines and 'Seminaries' were not in much better odour, let him call himself a Theatine, a comparatively small Italian Order scarcely known in England either for good or evil, under colour of whose name Jesuits at that time were not infrequently wont to pass.

It will be seen at once how cleverly this plan fits

the requirements of the case. A home is found for this priest at the French Embassy, where he would have what was so difficult to obtain for him in London at that time—free access to a church of his own religion. He could visit the king at Whitehall at all times under the guise of an astrologer who could predict the future, and a scientist who could help the king in his experiments in chemistry. At the same time, there was no danger of arousing Colbert's suspicions or jealousy, for he would believe that the priest was acting as an agent of France, and that Charles was being duped by his superstitions into an alliance of which in his heart he strongly disapproved. The whole situation would be full of humour, a comedy after Charles' own heart, where he alone would be in possession of all the secrets of the piece, and could pull the strings and make the puppets dance, as things developed at his own sweet will.

There is no evidence that Charles wrote to Louis at this time, but the events that follow seem to imply a more or less detailed communication on the lines given above. The next mail for France after January 25 left on the 28th, and would be delivered in Paris about February 7, allowing for the ten days' difference in time caused by the fact that France had adopted 'new style,' while England still remained devoted to the old calendar. The next mail for England would leave on the 10th, but it would perhaps be too much to hope for an answer by return to a request which obviously needed careful consideration. But the next mail but one after that brought a letter from Lionne to Colbert which fits in so extraordinarily with the plan we have suggested as being in Charles' mind, that it is only natural to suppose that it is

really in the main Charles' own writing, and has only been copied out by Lionne to send to the ambassador in England. The presence of 'the Italian' in London is apparently being 'covered up' at Charles' request, although the French authorities are still left entirely ignorant who it is for whom they are doing this kind of office, even to the extent of hoodwinking their own ambassador in England.

'The king' [writes Lionne to Colbert in this remarkable letter] 'has very often felt that in the case of one who is accredited as you are to a prince who is naturally very irresolute and easily persuaded, it would be greatly to your advantage to have at your entire disposition a person whom you could trust and is also capable, who could enter at all times into the king's amusements and his most secret occupations from which your character as ambassador necessarily exclude you. Such a person could be used by you to insinuate ideas which you cannot yourself suggest, or which would come better from a third party, and could keep you informed of all that is going on, while you could use him or leave him unemployed just as you thought best. Acting on this idea the king [Louis] has gladly embraced an opportunity which has offered of providing you with just such a person.

'You are no doubt aware who Father Pregnani is. He is a Theatine, whom the king has taken from the cloister and made an abbé. You will know also that he has as perfect a knowledge of judiciary astrology as is possible in a science that is so uncertain, and by its means he has got a great name here in Paris, especially among the ladies, who are always curious about the future, and want to know their fortune.

‘The Duke of Monmouth, when he was here last year, saw him often, and was altogether enchanted with the things he told him about his past, and the hopes he raised for his future. They became great friends, and when they parted the duke pressed him to manage to come over to England, since the king, his father, from what the duke had told him, had conceived a great desire to see him, for he is very fond of astrology, and gives it a great deal of credence. I must also say that the abbé is very learned in chemistry, which also, as we know here, is a great study of King Charles, who shuts himself for hours at a time with the Duke of Buckingham, having experiments made before him.

‘Now, some few days ago, the duke wrote to the abbé reminding him of his promise to go to England, and the abbé came and told the king, who had, as a matter of fact, for the reasons I have already said, caused him, through me, to try to get such a letter written. The king was, therefore, extremely pleased, and has laid down the following conditions upon which the abbé is to act. He is to enter into the amusements and occupations of the King of England, and to use every effort to assist you, as you may direct him, for he has been told nothing whatever here. He is not to say anything whatever about the king’s business [Louis] either to the duke or to milord [Arlington ?] or to any one else, except by your express direction ; and, lastly, although he is to give you a daily account of all that passes, under such conditions as you may wish and as may give no reason to any, even to King Charles, to suspect that you are acting in concert, he is not to write one word here while he is in England, not even to

me ; his majesty not wishing to hear anything except through you, as is only right. Consequently he is to tell you everything, even if he be charged to keep a secret from you. If he fails to do this and sends it on here without sharing in it, his majesty, no matter how much the thing may be to his advantage, will at once recall him.

‘ I think, Monsieur, that under these conditions, in which he will not dare to fail if he does not want to ruin himself over here, which he will not desire to do, the resolution the king has come to may be very advantageous to you in your negotiation. It is not impossible that the King of England may be persuaded on astrological grounds, since he puts much faith in them, that his only good and sure alliance is with France, and that any other entanglements may ruin his affairs and his authority. You will find, I am sure, that the abbé has a great deal of wit, and a marvellous dexterity in gaining his end, and that he will do marvels, especially with the help and guidance he will have from you. I have told him to descend at the Duke of Monmouth’s, so as not to give any suspicion of his arrival, and that he is to send to you this letter at the same time by his servant, so that it may be deciphered by the time that he comes to pay you his respects for the first time.’

Now, no doubt, there will be many who will be inclined to say, on reading this letter, that the explanation we have given is needlessly far-fetched, and that there is no reason why a more straightforward interpretation should not be adopted. A little thought, however, will be enough to convince them that the matter, look at it as we may, is by no means simple,

and some hypothesis must be formed to account for facts which are, to say the least, strangely contradictory. At this moment, as we know both from the Duke of York's Autobiography and from Charles' own letters to his sister, it was Charles who was pressing Louis to form an alliance, not Louis who was pressing Charles. Why then should Louis choose such a time for sending over a secret emissary to induce Charles, by methods which, to say the least, were extremely hazardous, to do the very thing which he was already doing on his own initiative. Secondly, we know that Colbert, in consequence of Charles' strongly-expressed request, was being deliberately kept in total ignorance of what was going on. He was not let into the secret till long after Pregnani had left England, and after, in consequence of his ignorance, he had committed more than one bad diplomatic blunder. It is inconceivable that Louis should just at that juncture have sent over a real secret agent with instructions to suck Charles' brain and to make no report to Louis but to tell all to Colbert. The position of such an agent, under such circumstances, would be one of quite extraordinary difficulty, calling for diplomatic gifts of a most exceptional character. Such an office would not be given to any but a tried and trusted servant who had acquitted himself well in more than one previous trust. For he would have to be possessed of confidences which were being kept even from the ambassador under whom he was to work, and his indiscretion might at any time give rise to a most serious situation. Is it conceivable that such a post was given to a mere priest-astrologer, whose very calling proclaimed him a man of few scruples and of a somewhat untrustworthy character; since astrology

was forbidden by the Church, and who, moreover, does not seem to have had any knowledge at all of diplomacy or ever to have been employed, before or after, on any similar task? Lastly, it is quite untrue that Charles was superstitious, or given to consulting fortune-tellers. On the contrary, as he wrote to Madame, he gave 'little credit to such kind of cattle,' and held that if they could tell anything of the future it were still better not to know it. Whatever may be thought of his private character no one has ever called his cleverness in question, and he was about the last person on whom it would be wise to attempt to play such a trick. Even Buckingham saw through this pretended astrologer at once, though he did not know why he had come, and Charles was far more astute than Buckingham. Louis would have been insane had he made the attempt to deceive him by so transparent a device. The more the matter is pondered over, the more impossible will it be seen to be to accept Pregnani as a genuine agent of France. The explanation we have given may involve difficulties, but the literal truth of Lionne's letter would involve far greater ones, nor does it seem possible to give any other explanation which will be more free from them.

Judging by the last words of Lionne's letter, the Abbé Pregnani was supposed to be starting at once and carrying it to England himself. If we allow for the difference in style, he ought to have arrived in London by February 17, and have presented himself at the French Embassy a day or two after that date. He did not actually arrive until a week later, at least he did not send this letter on to Colbert until Friday, February 26, and came to see him on the following day. Charles saw him during the week, for he writes

to Madame on March 7, 'I saw your friend, l'Abbé Pregnani, a man very ingenious in all things I have talked with him upon, and I find him to have a great deal of witt, but you may be sure I will enter no further with him than according to your carracter.'

On the 8th the king went to Newmarket and expressed his desire of having the abbé there with him. Doubtless interviews were more easily managed in the comparatively free life which the king lived there than would be possible among the prying eyes at Whitehall. The abbé travelled down apart from the king, and apparently by the ordinary coach that ran to Cambridge, for he rode from Audley End, and was very much fatigued by the unusual experience, as well as astonished, when he arrived at Newmarket, at the novel scenes around, and especially by the English devotion to horse-racing and other forms of sport.

On the whole, the most probable solution, taking into consideration all the evidence before us, seems to be that the Italian returned to France at once after the meeting of January 25, still travelling incognito, and without giving a name. He will have crossed by the packet of January 28 (English style), and arrived in Paris about February 10 (French style), and will have been charged with a letter to Madame, asking her to arrange the business of sending him back to England in the character of an astrologer. No such letter has survived, but then we have no letter from Charles to his sister between January 20 and March 7, and many letters have undoubtedly been destroyed for political reasons. If this surmise be right, Madame will have seen the Italian again during the fortnight or three weeks he was in Paris, which will account for several expressions in Charles' letters to her, implying

acquaintance, more or less intimate, with the abbé. She seems to have written to her brother, urging him not to put too much faith in this person, and especially on no account to tell him 'the great secret.' Evidently she distrusted the whole proceeding, not knowing who 'the profett' really was, and that he already knew almost as much about the whole business as she did herself; but the fact that she wrote thus is surely proof that he was not the mere French agent he professed to be.

At Newmarket the possession of a private prophet of his own seemed to Monmouth an admirable chance of making money. The abbé was requested to consult his books and to find out from the stars which horses were going to win. If only he had possessed a good knowledge of horseflesh here was a golden chance for him to establish his reputation, but his knowledge of horses and of racing was less even than his knowledge of astrology, so the experiment ended in disaster. Monmouth was no doubt surprised when he heard the names of the animals selected, but his faith in his prophet was such that he backed them heavily himself and induced his household to do the same, with effects that were by no means those for which he was so confidently hoping. The poor abbé's reputation as a competent astrologer suffered a sudden but lasting eclipse, and Charles, who no doubt was enormously amused by the turn things had taken, writes it all to Madame.

On his return to London about March 20, Charles paid a visit to Colbert, and could not resist poking a good deal of fun at the poor abbé and his unfortunate predictions, saying that Monmouth's servants were going to bring an action against him to recover the money they had lost, since not a single one of his

selections had succeeded in winning a race. Colbert, who believed in the *bona fides* of his guest and fellow-envoy, sat down and wrote a letter to Lionne, bearing the not inappropriate date of April 1, in which he tells his great misgivings that Charles would never pay much regard to any predictions the abbé might make in order to try to lead him into an alliance with France, since he had evidently lost all his credit through his unfortunate errors in the practical business of picking winners. Colbert had not lost all hope, however, for it might well be that, though he scoffed so loud in public, in private the king's superstitions might yet be sufficient to overpower his judgment. Meanwhile Pregnani is preparing a horoscope which will predict great misfortunes unless Charles allies himself with France. He has hopes of success himself, but says that Charles is a difficult subject, since he always prefers trifling even to the most important matters.

A later letter from Charles to his sister, dated May 6, says he finds 'the poore abbé' very much distressed at hearing that she has been told about his ill success in foretelling the horse matches. He is afraid that Madame will in consequence be prejudiced against him, and that through her others may be led to the same opinion. Charles has, therefore, promised to tell her that he was only trying new tricks which he had read of in books, and that 'he gave as little credit to them as we did'—a 'we' which apparently must not be taken as including Monmouth. He begs her, too, to do her best to ensure that no prejudice should come to him on that score, 'for the man has witt enough, and is as much your servant as possible, which makes me love him.'

Pregnani's fear that his credit would suffer with the French Government through his ill success at Newmarket proved only too well founded, for already, when Charles penned the words, Lionne had written to Colbert to say that as Pregnani was having so little success he had better come back to France at once. The ostensible reason was perhaps not the real one, and a more probable one may be found in the possibility that Louis was getting anxious, wondering who the abbé really was, and whether it was at all safe to trust him so completely. Colbert had written at once on his arrival to say that he proposed to tell him everything in order that he might have every chance of persuading the king, and his subsequent letters showed that he had actually carried out his intention. Pregnani knew as much, or almost as much, as Colbert himself of the intentions of the French Government, and it was quite possible that instead of telling Charles' secrets to Colbert, as that minister fondly imagined was the case, he was all the time telling the secrets of the French Government to the King of England. Colbert had received him too warmly and with too little reserve.

In any case so rapid a recall because of so small a matter seemed to Colbert very unnecessary, and, instead of communicating the message to Pregnani, he wrote back to Lionne urging that, after all, Pregnani was himself the best judge as to how far he had a chance of success, and saying that he still thought his prospects far from hopeless. The only result was that Lionne wrote twice more pressing his immediate return to France, and on the receipt of the second of these letters Colbert did not venture to temporise further—though he wrote to his brother to hint that he thought

a mistake was being made—but communicated the contents of Lionne's three letters to Pregnani himself.

The abbé was very much disconcerted and disappointed, and made no secret of the fact. He admitted that he did not think the king would be brought to a quick decision, and consented to go back to France. He will start, Colbert writes on June 17, in about a week from that time, and will travel straight to Paris to make his report to Lionne on the state of affairs in England. Once more Colbert assures Lionne that, if the abbé has not succeeded it has not been through want of any sympathy on his part, for he had concealed nothing at all from him, but had told him everything he knew himself. These words were hardly calculated to allay the fears which Louis seems to have conceived, and which we have already suggested were the real cause of the recall.

June 25 was accordingly fixed upon for the abbé's return to France. Charles, writing to Madame upon the 24th, says that he proposes to send another letter the following day by him. At the last moment, however, his journey was put off for another week; we do not know for what cause, unless it was that the king's letter was not ready. For there is a letter extant from Lionne to Colbert de Croissy dated July 27, which complains that the despatch written by Colbert on July 4 had long been delayed in transit—so long, indeed, that the later despatches of the 8th and of the 11th had actually arrived before it. It was therefore more than a week late. And the reason of this delay, Lionne goes on to explain, was the careless negligence of its bearer, the Abbé Pregnani, who 'used no great diligence in the matter.'

We know from another despatch from Colbert that

Pregnani actually started on July 5. He would have arrived at Calais on the 6th or 7th, according to the weather experienced. Then, apparently, something happened, for we cannot suppose that Pregnani would really be so careless when he was carrying important despatches as to linger unnecessarily for several days upon the road. July 6 or 7, according to English reckoning, would be, we must not forget, the 16th or 17th in France. Is Lionne telling the whole truth? His own letter of July 17, saying that he is momentarily expecting the abbé to arrive, is hardly consistent with this statement. Those were not the days of regular services timed to arrive to the minute. That he was momentarily expecting the abbé's arrival must mean that he knew he was already in Paris, or at least in France.

What was it that had happened? Why did the letter which ought to have reached Lionne on July 18 at latest not actually come into his hands until some eight days later?

From this moment the Abbé Pregnani disappears. He was never again employed as an agent between the two Governments. His name never occurs again in the official correspondence; at any rate, in such correspondence as is still extant; for Charles' letters to Madame, which might perhaps have told us more about him, have been destroyed by Louis XIV., into whose hands they came a year later, from the date of June 24, 1669, onwards. The date is worth noticing, for we see that the letter which was carried by Pregnani on this very journey, was precisely the first letter of the series which Louis thought it necessary to destroy. All the previous letters were spared, but this one and all the later ones were destroyed.

In this total absence of real evidence, a hypothesis is the only resource that is open to us. Is it possible that the abbé was arrested on landing in France, and detained in custody on the ground of possessing a dangerous knowledge of French secrets? If so, a further identification at once presents itself. The news of the arrest would get through to Paris on July 17 or 18 (new style).

On July 17 Lionne writes to Colbert that he is expecting the arrival of the Abbé Pregnani every moment. He has, therefore, presumably heard that the abbé has landed in France, if not that he is already in Paris.

On July 19, the letter we have already quoted in the earlier part of this book was written by Louvois in Paris to M. de Saint-Mars at Pignerol, bidding him to prepare for another prisoner of state, who has been arrested at Dunkirk, or at least is then in prison in that town, and who will be brought to him by M. de Vauroy, the king's lieutenant.

Calais and Dunkirk are not more than about twenty miles apart, within an easy day's ride the one of the other. The prisoner whom M. de Vauroy brought was accused of no crime, but he must never be allowed to tell to any living soul what was the business on which he had been employed before he came to Pignerol.

So, too, the Abbé Pregnani, whom we can trace to Calais or perhaps even to Dunkirk, since boats often went direct from England to that town, and it was constantly used as an alternative route to Paris, and who then 'disappears from history,' was possessed of State secrets of the greatest importance, and had been engaged on business which it was necessary at all

hazards to keep from public knowledge. Had he told all that he knew, Charles would quite possibly have lost his head, like his father before him, and Louis much more certainly would have lost all possible chance of changing England from an enemy into an ally in his great project of crushing Holland.

Here, then, is the solution we desire to offer of the mystery so long held to be insoluble. The man in the Iron Mask was none other than the Abbé Pregnani, a Catholic priest certainly and very probably a member of the Society of Jesus. His crime consisted in the knowledge of certain important secrets of French politics which had been confided to him by Colbert de Croissy under a misapprehension of the real nature of the mission which he had come to England to fulfil.

There was reason enough for secrecy, since Charles knew nothing of what had happened, and would have been infuriated to the last degree had he known that his friend and would-be ally had seized upon his envoy and sent him to solitary confinement. The discovery of that secret would have prevented all chance of an alliance being formed, quite as effectually as any disclosure which could possibly have been made by the unfortunate victim. No wonder the precautions taken were so extraordinarily minute.

Meanwhile, under the escort of M. de Vauroy, major of the fortress of Dunkirk, the unfortunate captive set forth on his long journey across France—a nameless prisoner, on his way to his long incarceration, which began at Pignerol in August 1669, and ended only with his death at the Bastille on November 18, 1703.

CHAPTER II

OBJECTIONS AND EXPLANATIONS

WHEN a quite new theory, such as that which we have just been propounding, is put forward, the immediate effect on the mind is on the one hand to raise up a number of objections, more or less plausible, which seem to render the proposed solution doubtful, if not impossible ; and, on the other, if the theory is a true one, to throw new light on a number of incidental details, which, till then, have seemed unimportant or altogether valueless. In these respects this theory is no exception to the general rule. Obvious objections will occur at once to every mind ; and, on the other hand, there are not wanting many points to which it seems to give a meaning, which till now has been altogether lacking. We will take the objections first in order.

The first and most obvious criticism which is likely to be made is that the Masked Man cannot possibly have been identical with the Abbé Pregnani, because of the definite statement in Louvois' letter to Saint-Mars, that no great preparation need be made for his material comfort, inasmuch as he is *only a servant*. Is not the whole of Mr. Andrew Lang's ingenious study on the subject, which gives the name to the volume he has called 'The Valet's Tragedy,' built up upon that single fact ?

The answer is that in French State-prison life in

the seventeenth century these things often go by contraries. In the case of a prisoner whose identity was being so carefully covered up, Louvois would never have been so foolish as to put his real condition down in writing, which might fall into the wrong hands. Just as prisoners in the Bastille were always, and as a matter of law, buried under fictitious names, so also, where there was reason for it, were they described fictitiously in the prison registers. To prove this, one has only to look at the descriptions furnished to Saint-Mars about his other prisoners, Mattioli and General du Bulonde. In the latter case, the case of the mysterious prisoner of 1674, the actual crime was the cowardly raising of the siege of Cuneo when he was in command of the royal forces. The description of him, however, which is furnished to Saint-Mars, is that he is to be kept without a fire and fed on bread and water, because 'c'est un fripon insigne qui en matière fort grave a abusé de gens considérables'; or, again, as 'un fripon achevé, qui ne sauroit être assez maltraité ni souffrir la peine qu'il a méritée.'¹ Mr. Andrew Lang would have shown more perspicacity if he had argued from Louvois' words, that this at least was certain about the identity of the prisoner, that whatever else he had been in former days, it was not as a servant that he had gained his living.

It has been suggested quite lately by Mr. Hugh Chisholm that the description need not apply to Dauger at all, but that Louvois is writing in reference to some lost letter of Saint-Mars with reference to a new valet for Fouquet. This may quite possibly be so.

But if this suggestion be rejected, it is a question worth discussing, why that particular vocation was

¹ Louvois to Saint-Mars, March 10, 1674.

fixed upon for his description. To that question two answers suggest themselves, each of which has its own special interest. The first is the fact that the French Government were at that moment interested in, and making inquiries about, a man who actually was a servant and living in England, and who it was thought might be possessed of valuable political information. This was Martin, the whilom valet of Roux de Marsilly, a Protestant adventurer of French extraction, whose life was spent in endeavours to bring about political combinations of the Northern States, in opposition on Protestant grounds to his own country. Roux de Marsilly had lately been in England on this errand, but he came, unfortunately for himself, at the wrong moment. Knowing nothing of Charles' opinions or of the Duke of York's conversion, he had tried to engage their sympathies against France and the Catholics, and had even gone so far as to disclose to the Duke of York the fact that there was a plot against Louis' life. He was drawn on and allowed to talk, and was given interviews and so forth with Arlington, being led to believe that Charles was not averse to fresh combinations being arranged against France. All this was extremely useful as a blind to the Dutch and Spanish ambassadors, who were also involved with Roux de Marsilly, and it served to draw off attention from what was really going on between England and France. At last Marsilly left England for Switzerland some time early in April, disappointed in not having obtained the adhesion of England to his scheme, but comforted by a commission to tell the authorities at Zurich that if they wanted England to join in with them, they must first cease to give a refuge to the regicides concerned in the death of Charles I.

In all this Charles had, no doubt, been playing a somewhat dangerous game, for all that was going on was pretty well known to the French ambassador, who wrote it all to Lionne. In consequence of this, Arlington was a good deal distrusted just then in France, and Madame writes to Charles as early as February 12 to protest against his being allowed to take too prominent a share in the secret negotiations. 'The man's attachment to the Dutch and his inclination towards Spain,' she wrote, 'are too well known.' Charles, however, was able to reassure her as to Arlington's fidelity, and the Duke of York informed Louis of Roux de Marsilly's plot against his life. It was through this information that Louis sent to seize Marsilly, on foreign territory though he was, and brought him to Paris. He was tortured to make him give up the names of his accomplices, and this failing, was broken on the wheel (June 26); really on James' information, but, since this was not publicly available, nominally for a previous crime committed at Nismes.¹

Colbert, who, of course, knew nothing at this date of the secret negotiations between England and France, was convinced that he had unearthed a conspiracy against France on the part of Charles and Arlington; and Charles found it necessary to send for him and make a personal explanation, which, however, was far from convincing him. Full of his idea, it occurred to him that possibly Martin, Roux's late valet, whom he had left in England, might know something of import-

¹ For the matter of Roux de Marsilly, see Andrew Lang's *The Valet's Tragedy*, p. 29, *seq.* Mr. Lang, however, gives a very inadequate account of the man and his plots, and he is altogether wrong on some points, especially in the part he conceives Arlington to have played. It was Buckingham, not Arlington, who had inklings of what was going on with France. Arlington knew everything.

ance, and accordingly he sent to interview him. The man utterly denied all knowledge of his late master's plottings, but later in the conversation seemed to imply by nods and so on that he knew more than he would admit. Colbert, therefore, suggested that it would be a good thing if he could be induced to go to France and give evidence there. He went so far as to suggest further that if the man persisted in his unwillingness to go, it might be well to take steps to compel him.

This, then, is the particular blind alley into which Mr. Lang has strayed. He has jumped to the conclusion that this valet is the one who was sent, later in the same month, to Pignerol, and who afterwards became 'the Man in the Iron Mask.' 'It is hardly conceivable, at least,' he writes, 'that when on July 1 a valet in England is "wanted" by the French police for political reasons, and when by July 19 they have caught a valet of extreme political importance, the two valets should be two different persons. Martin must be Dauger.'¹

The other reason which may have caused the selection of this particular designation, 'only a servant,' for the prisoner, is one which is also very uncertain, though it may provide a useful clue, and so at the risk of being thought over ingenious we include it. It would not, however, be safe to build much upon it.

On May 6, 1669, a passport was issued, not as usual through the Foreign Office, but direct from the king, to Matteo Battaglia, the king's servant, to go to Italy for three or four months on his own business and to return.² Now Battaglia was not the king's servant at

¹ *The Valet's Tragedy*.

² *State Papers (Domestic)*, 1668-9, p. 312.

all, he was the head of the music of the Queen's Chapel at St. James's, and he did not go to Italy at this time, for he was still in London in June of the same year. The date, which exactly coincides with Lionne's first recall of the Abbé Pregnani, suggests that that recall was possibly caused by a letter from Charles to Louis, and that its object was to cover up with Colbert Pregnani's imminent departure from London on a fresh journey to Rome, this time under the name of 'Matteo Battaglia, the king's servant.' If he were actually travelling under cover of this passport when he was arrested by Louis' orders, it might explain the designation under which he went to Pignerol. The unusual channel through which the passport was issued and the singular coincidence of dates are the only real grounds for suspecting anything of the kind. It is, however, to a certain extent strengthened by the fact that on October 28, 1670, at the exact moment when Charles was sending over by special courier his draft for the additional secret codicil to 'the fictitious treaty,' there is a similar issue of a passport for 'John Sebenico, an Italian master of the king, to go to his own country and return.'

This suggestion—it is really nothing more—that when Pregnani left England on July $\frac{5}{15}$, nominally in response to Lionne's recall, he was really on his way to Rome again with some fresh business on Charles' behalf, is probable enough in itself, and, if true, may help to throw light on what otherwise seems a real difficulty. If Pregnani went to Paris only and then disappeared, would it not be certain that Charles would soon have become anxious at not hearing from him and have instituted searching inquiries as to what had become of him? If, however, he left Charles

with the intention of going to Italy, nothing would be heard of him in the ordinary course of events for at least two months, and, if his business was long delayed, perhaps for three or four. Charles would not become anxious for quite a long time on the score of want of news, and meanwhile the trail would become increasingly hard to follow.

However, we do not know that Charles did not make anxious inquiries on the subject. The place where we should look for the record of such inquiries would naturally be his letters to Madame. She did not know who Pregnani really was, no doubt ; but, at least, she knew more than any one else in France, and she was in a position to have inquiries made. The idea that Louis, his trusted friend, had seized and shut up his envoy probably never occurred either to Charles or to Madame. They will have thought rather of some terrible accident in which he might have been involved, some sickness which carried him off in the course of his long and lonely journey, or, at the worst, of robbers in some desolate part of the road.

But when we turn to the file of Charles' letters we find that they are wanting for the very dates which we desire. When the news of Madame's terribly sudden death reached England in June 1670 Charles sent off a message at once to Louis bidding him secure the correspondence which had passed between him and his sister, which contained too many secrets to be safely left to fall into other hands. Louis sent for them at once and had them brought to him, which is how they come now to be among the other royal papers. But he carefully destroyed all the letters after June 24, 1669, beginning, that is to say, with the very one which Charles had promised to write and to commit

to Pregnani's hands. The fact that that particular date should be chosen for the destruction of all later letters—though, of course, it is a merely negative argument and can prove nothing whatever—is, to say the least, a very curious coincidence.

Still the question remains, why should this prisoner be made to wear a mask? The answer would seem to be that Louis feared that he would be seen and known by some one who had actually been acquainted with him in earlier years. It is only in later years that we find this anxiety existing. In the beginning, at Pignerol, the fear is not that the prisoner will be recognised, but that he will tell his secret. But in later years, when perhaps the secret was of less importance, this new fear seems to come in. The reason may have been that in those later years, after the fall of James II., France was full of exiled Jacobites from England, any one of whom might easily have known and talked with the prisoner in other days at Charles' court. The Bastille, it must be remembered, was a prison where people of quality were often confined, and where they were visited not infrequently by friends from outside.

These seem to be the principal difficulties in the way, and they are not insurmountable. Our next task will be to consider the characteristics of the actual prisoner so far as these are known to us, and to see how far they fit in with the theory that he was the Abbé Pregnani, a Catholic priest.

It fits well enough with the character given by Madame Palatine that he was 'very devout and read incessantly.' It explains, too, the extraordinary resignation of the prisoner, who, Saint-Mars was convinced, would never wish to leave his prison, 'being

entirely resigned to the will of God and of the king.' He must have wondered why his captivity was necessary, but accepted it as the will of God and as his own appointed work for the Church. Having a true religious vocation, he will have used his solitary prison as the Carthusian uses his cell, and possibly led a life that was by no means unhappy or altogether unsuited to his temperament.

The age fits fairly well. The prisoner in the mask believed himself to be about sixty when he died. He had been in captivity for three-and-thirty years. That would allow him to have been seven or eight-and-twenty in 1669, which is younger than we should have expected, but still a quite possible age for Pregnani to have been.

If we may suppose that the secret of his quality and former employment leaked out and became known to Saint-Mars at some later period, that would account for the very different treatment he seems to have received in his later years from that which had been given to him when he first came to Pignerol. Saint-Mars admitted him to his own table on the way from Sainte-Marquerite to the Bastille. He would hardly have sat at the same table in 1677 with Foucquet's valet, more especially as he was himself a noble, though but of recent creation.

If the story that the unknown prisoner was really in some way connected with the royal house of England be supposed to have become known, at least to some small degree, in the Isle Sainte-Marguerite, the various surmises which were made are to a great extent accounted for. That was why in 1688 they were saying he was 'a son of the late Cromwell,' and why at a later date men connected him with the Duke of

Monmouth, or, as in Madame Palatine's story, with a nobleman who had fought against William III. under the Duke of Berwick. It is curious how in cases of this kind some distorted version of the truth always gets about, no matter how carefully the secret may be guarded.

It is easy enough to see that Pregnani in 1669 must certainly have been in possession of secrets which it was worth Louis' while to guard from the knowledge of all, even at the cost of depriving a harmless and innocent man of his liberty. A few years later, in 1675, the secrets would have lost most of their value. In the height of the madness of the Popish Plot the chance of Charles being able to declare his religion looked exceedingly remote. Moreover, Louis had already obtained all that he wanted in the way of help against the Dutch. That, then, was the moment when the prisoner could with comparative safety be put as servant to M. Fouquet. Even then he must not see any one else, and especially not Lauzun, who would be at liberty again before very long. But Fouquet could not matter much. Louis was quite determined that *he* should never be set free again. Since he had once been a minister of state he knew already so many secrets that one more in addition could do but little harm; especially as, with regard to this particular secret of state, he probably knew it more or less already, since he had had sole charge of the negotiations carried on with Charles in 1660. The fact that our prisoner was put as servant to Fouquet certainly presents much less difficulty than would have done the choice of any other master for him to serve.

In 1681 the secret is becoming again of more importance, and the prisoner is to be taken to Exiles

and not left behind at Pignerol. In 1682 there is a fresh accession of precaution, and Saint-Mars is once more especially warned to see that his prisoner had no chance of communicating with any one. This was just the time when the excesses of the Popish Plot had passed away, and Charles was once more opening negotiations with France. The secret, therefore, in 1682 would have had almost the same importance that it had possessed in 1669. Nor did that importance, politically speaking, much diminish until the end of the reign of James II. in 1689.

From 1687 to the end is, as we have already said, the period of better treatment and of increased anxiety lest the face should be seen and recognised. That also fits in well with our theory. The secret of Charles' Catholicism and of his dependence on French support would by that time be comparatively unimportant, while the awkwardness which would have been caused by any recognition of the prisoner was increased rather than diminished when James II. was actually Louis' guest and living at St. Germain's.

The idea has never hitherto been raised that 'the Man in the Mask' might conceivably have been an ecclesiastic or even a priest. We exclude the hypothesis that he was the patriarch Avedick, for that has never been seriously put forward since the records have been available. These records do, however, lend a certain support to the idea, although by themselves they are entirely insufficient to afford an actual proof.

We have mentioned already the facts that the prisoner was very devout and read continually; that he was extraordinarily resigned and never complained of his lot; and to these points we may add one more, that his first request on arriving at Pignerol

was for books of Catholic devotion. This evidence proves clearly enough that he was a good Catholic, but it proves nothing more. There remain, however, certain other indications, weak and perhaps apparently far-fetched each of them when standing alone, but possessed, nevertheless, of a certain cumulative force when taken all together.

On August 7, 1680, immediately after the death of Fouquet, and when his two valets 'Dauger' and La Rivière were already immured in the *tour d'en bas*, unknown to any one except Saint-Mars—it being generally supposed that they had been set at liberty, Saint-Mars wrote to Louvois to ask that he might be allowed to put Mattioli, who was at that time sharing a cell with Dubreuil in the other tower, with the mad Jacobin in the upper chamber of the *tour d'en bas*. Louvois writes on the 16th to say that the king approves of this arrangement, 'pour éviter l'entretien de deux aumoniers' ('to avoid keeping two chaplains'). These last words present considerable difficulty. All the prisoners heard Mass together in the general chapel of the *donjon*, being in a specially arranged gallery where they could neither see each other nor be seen. How could it possibly make any difference in the number of chaplains employed whether a particular prisoner shared the cell of one or another of his fellow prisoners?

It must, however, be remembered that all these despatches are written in language that is often intentionally veiled, intelligible to the proper recipient, but not to any one else into whose hands they might possibly fall. As an instance, take the permission granted to Saint-Mars to visit Catinat, who had been staying at Pignerol, but had now taken up the com-

mand at Casale. 'Le Roi ne trouvera point mauvais que vous alliez voir de temps en temps le dernier prisonnier que vous avez entre les mains lorsqu'il sera estably dans sa nouvelle prison.' ('You may go to visit your last prisoner when he is settled in his new prison.') Except to Saint-Mars himself those words would have no meaning, and in our own time they actually misled M. Loiseleur, who erected a whole theory of his own upon them through interpreting them strictly literally.

Now the words at present before us might equally well be translated, 'to avoid any intercourse between two priests,' and this translation gives a more intelligible meaning. The Jacobin in the upper chamber will be one of these priests, but who, on this interpretation, is the other? Clearly, it must be one of the two in the other chamber of the same tower—'Dauger' and La Rivière—and since La Rivière is out of the question, 'Dauger' remains the only possible person. Saint-Mars just at that time was unusually terrified lest prisoners should communicate with one another, for he had just discovered the means by which Foucquet and Lauzun had so long carried on their secret intercourse. Now the fact that he had two ecclesiastics in adjoining chambers aroused his fears, and Mattioli is put with the Jacobin to be a check upon any attempted communication. The weak point of the suggestion obviously lies in the fact that Saint-Mars could have attained this end so much more efficaciously by removing the Jacobin altogether, and one does not quite see why he could not adopt that course.

The next year finds them at Exiles, and here Saint-Mars writes that he has separated off a portion of the

chamber occupied by the two prisoners, so as to serve as a chapel where Mass can be said. They hear Mass, therefore, without leaving the tower. He specially mentions 'the priest who says Mass for them,' and who could not see them when he did so because of this partition. If this were not so, one would be inclined to surmise that the plan was devised for the express purpose of allowing one of the prisoners to say Mass. For priests were not common at Exiles, and a Mass said in a prison cell would clearly be of no use to Saint-Mars, his family, and the men of the Free Company. The only other probable conclusion would be that the prisoners were allowed the privilege of a daily Mass as Fouquet had been, and that to save the trouble of bringing them down each day to the general chapel this little altar was fitted up in the cell itself.

This opinion is strengthened when we come to the journey between Exiles and Sainte-Marguerite. Here Saint-Mars writes that he will not be able to arrange for his prisoner to hear Mass on the way, but that when he arrives at the Island and is placed in the prison which is being specially built for him, he will have a chapel adjoining his cell. Here, again, it does not look as if it was merely the Sunday obligation that is being thought of. That could be managed with comparative ease. They would hardly have built a tiny chapel adjoining the cell and necessitating a separate Mass, if Sundays alone were being considered. The tradition in the island is that he had a separate Mass of his own, not that he was a priest and said one for himself, and a very handsome faldstool is preserved which he is said to have used at Mass.

The move to Sainte-Marguerite is the moment when his more generous treatment seems to begin. His old

worn-out furniture was sold and left behind at Exiles, and a new outfit was provided. Saint-Mars at the end of the year sends the gross total that has been spent, but dare not send the items lest some inquisitive person should learn from them more than he ought to know concerning the prisoner's identity. The fitting up of the chapel will have been part of this year's expenditure, as also will the purchase of the new furniture for the cell.

At the Bastille there is no trace of a special chapel, still less of the prisoner's being allowed to say Mass. He has, however, a special permission 'to confess and communicate as often as he wishes.' But, for anything that we know, there may have been a private chapel provided here also, and the great burning of furniture and recolouring of the walls of his apartment, may have been in part rendered necessary by the desire of obliterating any trace of this special privilege.

If we try to sum up the whole matter, we shall probably come to the conclusion that, although there is not enough evidence to lead us to be sure that the prisoner ever said Mass or was a priest, there is certainly evidence which tends to show that, at least in the later years of his life, he was allowed religious privileges which, in the case of a prisoner, must be admitted to have been quite exceptional. It by no means follows, of course, that, even if he had been known to be a priest, he would have been allowed to say Mass. Louis and his ministers were, in a way, good theologians, and they dared not refuse to any prisoner the right to fulfil the minimum of religious duty enjoined upon him by the Church—to hear Mass on Sundays and feast days, and to confess and communicate at least once a year at Easter time. At the

same time, they knew also that for a priest who has not any cure of souls, the saying of Mass is a privilege, rather than, strictly speaking, a duty, least of all to one who is a prisoner. We have no reason to think that the mad Jacobin at Pignerol, or any one of the many priests who were confined at one time or other in the Bastille, were ever allowed to say Mass.

The whole story of the Abbé Pagnani, whether the identification with the Man of the Mask be accepted or not, must be admitted to contain several remarkable features. All that we know of him has to be gathered from the correspondence of Lionne with Colbert de Croissy, or from that of Charles II. with Madame. There does not seem to be any allusion to him in all the wealth of personal Memoirs, the writing and publication of which is such a remarkable feature of the literature of the age of Louis XIV. Like Melchizedech he comes on to the stage and passes off it, without our being able to tell anything at all either of his earlier history or of his later life. Here is a man, if we are to believe the account of him given by Lionne to Colbert, who was well known in Paris, and especially to all the ladies of the fashionable world, as an astrologer of the most remarkable powers. He has attracted the notice of the most exalted personages, even of the king himself. Royal visitors to Paris, like Monmouth, are taken to see him and are keenly anxious to consult him. Lionne even assumes that his fame will have penetrated to England, and that Colbert in his exile at the English Court will have heard of his achievements. Now he has been selected by the king to proceed to England in person, and to take up a delicate mission for which these qualifications supremely fit him. One would have supposed, from

this account, that all Paris was ringing with his fame. Kings do not choose unknown men as their envoys, even on secret missions. And yet, when we come to consult contemporary literature, which exists for this period in almost unexampled profusion, we cannot find so much as a trace that such a person ever existed. What happened to him after he returned to Paris? Did he once more take up his profession of an astrologer? If so, his later career has left no more trace than the earlier upon contemporary literature or public records. The argument from silence is always dangerous and often misapplied, but some explanation of such a conspiracy of silence ought to be forthcoming. If future research should disclose anything about Pregnani's later life it would, no doubt, make the identification with the masked prisoner impossible, but if further careful search remains as unfruitful as it has been in the past, then it must be admitted that there is good ground for saying that the solution of the mystery has at last been found.

This, perhaps, is the best place to consider, in conclusion, the possible connection with Pregnani, and hence with the Man in the Mask, of the two pieces of religious controversy found in King Charles' possession after his death. These papers, it may perhaps be remembered, were found in Charles' cabinet—another account says in his pocket—kept, along with the relic of the True Cross, once the property of one of the martyred Jesuits, among his most treasured possessions. They were entirely in his own handwriting, but were not signed or docketed in any way which would give a clue to their origin. The language was French, and it is clear on examination that they were not actually composed by Charles himself, but were

originally addressed to him and intended for his perusal.

If we suppose that these papers were connected with the mission of Pregnani—and it is not easy to assign to them any more probable origin—it is not so very difficult to surmise why it was that the king kept them so carefully. They were, perhaps, the only relics he possessed of one for whom he had cherished a real respect and a sincere regard ; one whom he had hoped at one time would have been able to set his conscience at rest, and free him from the bonds he had come to loathe, but from which he had never had the courage to break away, and one, too, who had so strangely disappeared, just as his ministrations were approaching fruition, that no inquiry had been able to reveal anything of his fate, by what means he had met his death, or even whether he were at that moment alive or dead. No wonder that Charles kept those papers so carefully ; no wonder that when they were worn out with constant perusal, he reverently copied them out again with his own hand ; no wonder that he kept them stored away in secret, together with another sacred treasure which he let no one know of but himself—the relic of the Holy Cross which had been taken from the body of Father Whitbread, the Jesuit martyr, whose death-warrant for high treason he had been forced to sign with his own hand, although he well knew that he was innocent of the crime laid to his charge. To Charles these papers must have spoken eloquently enough of hopes that were past and gone, of ideals that he still longed for but now could never attain, of a call unheeded and a life misspent, and a door that once stood open, but now seemed to have closed eternally.

Thus, then, we bring our long-drawn story to its close. Charles himself and this poor victim of French tyranny, though so strangely different in worldly position, were yet in some ways singularly alike in destiny. Each alike wore the mask and lived a solitary life, cut off from all his kind, though one languished in a prison and the other sat upon a throne. 'No one except myself and my lieutenant,' said Saint-Mars, 'can boast that he has ever seen the face of my prisoner.' 'No one,' we can fancy Charles rejoining, 'except, perhaps, my sister Henrietta, can boast that he has ever fully known my heart.' The king wore his mask upon the throne, living solitary in the midst of a crowd; a mask of his own choosing, though it was hateful to look upon, and it irked and galled him, and the saddest thing in his life is that no one realised it was a mask at all, but took it for the manifestation of his own true nature. The priest wore his mask in a cell, cut off, not by his own choosing, from all his kind, living a life which seems almost unsupportable, and yet which had become tolerable, and perhaps even not unpleasant, through his own courage and patient resignation. Nor is there room for doubt as to which life was the happier—that of 'the Merrie Monarch' in the midst of splendour and wanton extravagance, but with the worm of conscience ever gnawing at his heart, or that of the poor prisoner in the solitude of the narrow cell he had made into a hermitage, never complaining or repining at his lot; but, as even his gaoler is ready to confess, living 'content' and 'in a great quietude,' 'like a man wholly resigned to the will of God and of the king.'

APPENDIX
OF
ORIGINAL DOCUMENTS

BOOK I.

DOCUMENTS CONCERNING 'THE MAN IN THE
IRON MASK.'*Louvois to Saint-Mars, July 19th, 1669.*

LE ROY m'ayant commandé de faire conduire à Pignerol le nommé . . . il est de la dernière importance à son service qu'il soit gardé avec une grande seureté, et qu'il ne puisse donner de ses nouvelles en nulle manière, ni par lettres à qui que ce soit. Je vous en donne advis par advance, afin que vous puissiez faire accomoder un cachot où vous le mettrez seurement, observant de faire en sorte que les jours qu'aura le lieu où il sera, ne donnent point sur des lieux qui puissent estre abordéz de personne, et qu'il y ayt assez de portes fermées, les unes sur les autres, pour que vos sentinelles ne puissent rien entendre. Il faudra que vous portiez vous mesme à ce misérable, une fois le jour, de quoy vivre toute la journée, et que vous n'escoutiez jamais, soubz quelque prétexte que ce puisse estre, ce qu'il voudra vous dire, le menaçant tousjours de la faire mourir s'il vous ouvre jamais la bouche pour vous parler d'autre chose que de ses nécessités.

Je mande au sieur Poupart de faire incessamment travailler à ce que vous desirerez, et vous ferez préparer les meubles qui sont nécessaires pour la vie de celui que l'on vous amènera, observant que, comme ce n'est qu'un valet, il ne luy en faut pas de biens considérables, et je vous feray rembourser tant de la despenses des meubles, que de ce que vous desirerez pour sa nourriture.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 234, fo. 272. Printed by Delort.

Louis XIV. to De Vauroy, July 28th, 1669.

Capitaine de Vauroy, étant mal satisfait de la conduite du nommé . . . et voulant m'assurer de sa personne, je vous écris cette lettre pour vous dire qu'aussitôt que vous l'aurez vue vous ayez à le saisir et arrêter, et à le conduire vous-même en toute sûreté dans la citadelle de Pignerol, pour y être gardé par les soins du Capitaine de Saint-Mars

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 234, fo. 272. Printed by Iung.

Louis XIV. to Saint-Mars, July 28th, 1669.

Envoyant à ma citadelle de Pignerol, sous la conduite du capitaine de Vauroy, sergent-major de ma ville et citadelle de Dunkerque le nommé . . . je vous écris cette lettre pour vous dire que lorsque ledit capitaine de Vauroy sera arrivé en madite citadelle de Pignerol, avec ledit prisonnier, vous ayez à le recevoir de ses mains et à le tenir sous bonne et sûre garde, empêchant qu'il n'ait communication avec qui que ce soit de vive voix ou par écrit.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 234, fo. 274. Printed by Iung.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, August 21st, 1669.

M. de Vauroy a remis entre mes mains le nommé Eustache d'Auger. Aussitôt que je l'eus mis dans un lieu fort sûr, en attendant que le cachot que je lui fais préparer soit parachevé. . . Je lui dis en présence de M. de Vauroy, que s'il me parloit à moi ou à quelqu'autre, d'autre chose que pour ses nécessités, je lui mettrois mon épée dans le ventre. . . . Je ne manquerai pas de ma vie, d'observer fort ponctuellement vos commandemens.

Printed by Roux Fazillac.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, August 31st, 1669.

Il n'y a rien de plus vrai que je n'ai jamais parlé de ce prisonnier à qui que ce soit, et pour marque de cela, bien de monde croit ici que c'est un Maréchal de France, et d'autres disent un président.

Printed by Roux Fazillac.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, September 10th, 1669.

J'ay reçu vos lettres des 24 et dernier du mois passé. Vous pouvez donner à vostre nouveau prisonnier un livre de prières, et s'il vous en demande quelque autre, le luy donner aussi. Vous pourrez luy faire entendre, les dimanches et les festes, la messe qui se dira pour monsieur Foucquet, sans pourtant estre dans le même lieu, et vous observerez de le faire si bien garder durant ce temps là, qu'il ne puisse s'évader ni parler à personne ; vous pourrez mesme le faire confesser trois ou quatre fois l'année, s'il le desire, et non point d'avantage, à moins qu'il ne luy survinst quelque maladie périlleuse.

L'on m'avoit mandé que vous aviez dit à monsieur de la Bretonnière que l'on vous devoit envoyer un prisonnier, mais je suis bien ayse que cela ne se soit point trouvé véritabe.

Archives Nationales, K. 120, 68. Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, September 25th, 1669.

J'ay appris, par vostre lettre du 4 de ce mois, l'indisposition de monsieur Foucquet et le sentiment qu'en ont les médecins ; comme aussy que le prisonnier qui vous a esté envoyé en dernier lieu est incommodé : de sorte qu'il a besoin d'estre saigné pour recouvrer sa santé, sur quoy je vois diray qu'il n'y a nulle difficulté à le faire, et que lors que de pareilles choses arriveront, vous pourrez le faire traicter et médicamenter selon qu'il en sera besoin, sans attendre d'ordre pour cela, me donnant seulement compte de ce qui se sera passé, comme vous avez accoustumé de faire.

Archives Nationales, K. 120, 69. Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, March 26th, 1670.

. . . L'on ma donné advis que le sieur Honneste, ou un des valetz de monsieur Foucquet, a parlé au prisonnier qui vous a esté amené par le major le Dunquerque, et luy a, entre autres choses, demandé s'il n'avoit rien de conséquence à luy dire, à quoy il a respondu qu'on le laissast en paix : il

en a uzé ainsy, croyant probablement que c'estoit quelqu'un de vostre part qui l'interrogeoit pour l'esprouver, et voir s'il diroit quelque chose ; par là, vous jugerez bien que vous n'avez pas pris assez de précautions pour empescher qu'il n'eust quelque communication que ce pust estre ; et, comme il est très important au service de sa Majesté, qu'il n'en ayt aucune, je vous prie de visiter soigneusement le dedans et le dehors du lieu où il est enfermé, et de le mettre en estat que le prisonnier ne puisse voir ni estre veu de personne, et ne puisse parler à qui que ce soit, ni entendre ceux qui luy voudroient dire quelque chose.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, April 12th, 1670.

Il y a des personnes qui sont quelquefois si curieuses de me demander des nouvelles de mon prisonnier, ou le sujet pourquoi je fais faire tant de retranchemens pour ma sûreté, que je suis obligé de leur dire des contes jaunes pour me moquer d'eux.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, August 7th, 1671.

Je ne puis que vous mander, Monseigneur, si ce n'est les maladies qui commencent de nous venir voir. M. Foucquet a une petite fièvre qui ne l'incommode pas beaucoup, mais l'un de ses valets est très mal, comme aussi le prisonnier qui m'a été envoyé. J'en aurai soin ainsi que de les bien garder.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre. Printed by Ravaisson.

NOTE.—'Dauger,' who is spoken of in this veiled way by Saint-Mars writing to Louvois, is spoken of by Louvois in return as 'votre second prisonnier.'—Ravaisson, *Archives de la Bastille*, iii. p. 85. At this date Foucquet, 'Dauger,' and Honneste were the only prisoners in Saint-Mars' charge. Honneste was set free before September 1671. Saint-Mars writes again a week later : 'Un de ses valets et le prisonnier qu'on ma' amené sont extrêmement malades, ils me donnent de l'occupation assez pour leur souhaiter de la santé.' On September 5 : 'M. Foucquet se porte présentement assez bien,

à la sciatique près qui l'incommode encore un peu. Pour l'un de ses valets et mon autre prisonnier, ils sont toujours malades, mais beaucoup moins qu'ils n'ont été.'—Ravaisson, iii. p. 99.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, February 20, 1672.

Il est si malaisé de pouvoir trouver ici des valets qui se veuillent enfermer avec mes prisonniers que je prendai la liberté de vous en proposer un : ce prisonnier qui est dans la tour, et que vous m'avez envoyé par M. le major de Dunkerque, serait, ce me semble, un bon valet. Je ne pense pas qu'il dît à M. de Lauzun d'où il sort, après que je lui aurais défendu ; je suis sûr qu'il ne lui dirait pas aussi aucune nouvelle, ni ne me demanderait point de sortir de sa vie, comme font tous les autres. . . .

Je doute que [le premier valet que j'ai donné à M. de Lauzun] ne soit gagné par son maître. Je ne saurais tirer aucune parole de lui, et il fût tout de même qu'ont fait ceux de M. Foucquet quand ils ont été gagné par leur maître. Si ce gaillard là vient à tomber malade, je le retirerai des appartements de M. de Lauzun, avec votre permission, et le mettrai dans un lieu que je réserve, qui fait jaser les muets, après y avoir demeuré un mois. Je saurai par là toutes choses de lui, et je suis assuré qu'il n'oubliera pas la moindre bagatelle à me dire. . . .

Je n'en chercherai point que vous ne m'avez fait la grâce de me faire response sur l'homme de la tour.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre. Printed by Ravaisson.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, December 30th, 1673.

Pour le prisonnier de la tour que M. de Vauroy m'a amené, il ne dit rien, il vit content, comme un homme tout à fait résigné à la volonté de Dieu et du Roi.

Printed by Iung, p. 195. No reference given.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, January 30th, 1675.

J'ay reçu vostre lettre du 19 de ce mois, et j'ay rendu compte au Roy de ce qu'elle contient. Sa Majesté approuve

que vous donniez, pour valet, à monsieur Foucquet, le prisonnier que le sieur de Vauroy vous a conduit ; mais, quelque chose qui puisse arriver, vous devez vous abstenir de le mettre avec monsieur de Lauzun, ni avec qui que ce soit, autre que monsieur Foucquet.

C'est-à-dire que vous pouvez donner le dit prisonnier à M. Foucquet, si son valet venoit à luy manquer et non autrement.

Archives Nationales, K. 120, 167. Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, March 11th, 1675.

J'ay reçu vostre lettre du 26 du mois passé. Si vous pouvez trouver un valet qui soit propre à servir monsieur de Lauzun, vous pouvez le luy donner ; mais, pour quelque raison que ce puisse estre, il ne faut point que vous luy donniez le prisonnier que le sieur de Vauroy vous a amené, qui ne doit servir, en cas de nécessité, qu'à monsieur Foucquet, ainsy que je vous l'ay mandé.

Archives Nationales, K. 120, 168. Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, November 23rd, 1676.

J'ay reçu vostre lettre du 14 de ce mois et par laquelle vous me faites part de l'estat de vos prisonniers. Je vous prie de me mander qui est logé avec le sieur Dubreuil, que vous dites est si fol, me marquant son nom et celui par lequel il vous a esté amené ; et, m'envoyant une copie de la lettre qui vous a esté escrite pour le faire recevoir, afin que je puisse mieux me remettre dans l'esprit quel il est. . . .

Louvois to Foucquet, December 23rd, 1678.

C'est avec beaucoup de plaisir que je satisfais au commandement qu'il a plu au Roi de me faire de vous donner avis que S. M. est en disposition de donner dans peu de temps des adoucissements fort considérables à votre prison ; mais, comme elle désire auparavant être informée si le nommé Eustache, que l'on vous a donné pour vous servir, n'a point parlé devant l'autre valet qui vous sert, de ce à quoi il a été

employé auparavant que d'être à Pignerol, Sa Majesté m'a commandé de vous le demander, et de vous dire qu'elle s'attend que sans aucune considération vous me manderez la vérité de ce que dessus, afin qu'elle puisse prendre les mesures qu'elle trouvera plus à propos sur ce qu'elle apprendra par vous que le dit Eustache aura pu dire de sa vie passée à son camarade. L'intention de Sa Majesté est que vous fassiez réponse à cette lettre, en votre particulier, sans rien témoigner de ce qu'elle contient à M. de Saint-Mars auquel je mande que le Roi désire qu'il vous remette du papier.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre. Printed by Ravaisson.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, December 27th, 1678.

Sa Majesté profiteroit de l'avis que vous lui avez donné au sujet du prisonnier que le sieur de Vauroy lui avait amené.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 681, fo. 524. Printed by Iung.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, January 20th, 1679.

Mémoire de la manière dont le Roy désire que monsieur de Saint-Mars garde, à l'advenir, les prisonniers qui sont à sa charge.

Touttes les fois que monsieur Foucquet descendra dans la chambre de monsieur de Lauzun, ou que monsieur de Lauzun montera dans la chambre de monsieur Foucquet, ou quelqu'autre estranger, monsieur de Saint-Mars aura soin de retirer le nommé Eustache et ne le remettra dans la chambre de monsieur Foucquet que lorsqu'il n'y aura plus que luy et son ancien valet.

Il en uzera de mesme lorsque monsieur Foucquet ira se promener dans la citadelle, faisant rester le dit Eustache dans la chambre de monsieur Foucquet, et ne souffrant point qu'il le suive à la promenade que lorsque mon dit sieur Foucquet ira seul avec son ancien valet pour se promener dans le lieu où Sa Majesté a trouvé bon depuis quelque temps que monsieur de Saint-Mars luy faist prendre l'air.

Cecy est la volonté de Sa Majesté.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, February 15th, 1679.

. . . Le Roy se remet à vous de régler avec monsieur Foucquet, comme vous jugerez à propos, ce qui regardera la seureté de la personne du nommé Eustache Dager, vous recommandant sur tout, de faire en sorte qu'il ne parle à personne en particulier. . . .

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 618, fo. 265. Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Foucquet, February 17th, 1679.

J'ai lu au Roi la lettre que vous avez pris la peine de m'écrire le 3^e de ce mois ; elle ne désire de réponse que pour vous faire savoir que Sa Majesté veut bien se remettre à vous de la conduite qu'il faudra tenir à l'égard d'Eustache Dager.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre. Printed by Ravaisson.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, September 13th, 1679.

Votre lettre du 2^e de ce mois m'a été rendue par le sieur de Blainvilliers. . . . Je vous prie de me mander des nouvelles de la santé d'Eustache Dager, et de ce que se passera parmi vos prisonniers.

Archives Nationales. Printed by Ravaisson.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, April 8th, 1680.

Le Roy a appris, par la lettre que vous m'avez écrite le 23 du mois passé, la mort de monsieur Foucquet, et le jugement que vous faictes que monsieur de Lauzun sçait la pluspart des choses importantes dont monsieur Foucquet avoit cognoissance, et que le nommé la Rivière ne les ignore pas : surquoy Sa Majesté ma commandé de vous faire sçavoir, qu'après que vous aurez faict reboucher le trou par lequel messieurs Foucquet et de Lauzun ont communiqué à vostre insçeu, et cela rétably si solidement, qu'on ne puisse travailler en cet endroit . . . que vous persuadiez à monsieur de Lauzun, que les nommés Eustaches d'Augers, et le dit la Rivière, ont été mis en liberté, et que vous en parliez de même à tous ceux qui pourroyent vous en demander des nouvelles ; que cependant

vous les renfermiez tous deux dans une chambre, où vous puissiez répondre à Sa Majesté qu'ils n'auront communication avec qui que ce soit, de vive voix, n'y par écrit, et que monsieur de Lauzun ne pourra point s'apercevoir qu'ils y sont renfermez. . . .

Archives Nationales, K. 120, 302. Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, July 10th, 1680.

J'ay reçu avec vostre lettre du 4 de ce mois, ce qui y estoit joint, dont je feray l'usage que je dois. Il suffira de faire confesser une fois l'année les habitans de la tour d'en bas.

A l'esgard du sieur de Lestang, j'admire vostre patience, et que vous attendiez un ordre pour traiter un fripon comme il le mérite, quand il vous manque de respect.

Mandez-moi comme il est possible que le nommé Eustache ayt fait ce que vous m'avez envoyé, et où il a pris les drogues nécessaires pour le faire, ne pouvant croire que vous les luy ayez fournies.

Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, August 16th, 1680.

J'ay veu, par vostre lettre du 7 de ce mois, la proposition que vous faites de mettre le sieur de Lestang avec le jacobin pour éviter l'entretien de deux aumosniers. Le roy approuve ce que vous projetez sur cela, et vous n'avez qu'à l'exécuter.

Printed by Delort.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, September 7th, 1680.

Depuis que Monseigneur m'a permis de mettre Matthioli avec le jacobin dans la tour d'en bas, ledit Matthioli a été quatre ou cinq jours à croire que le jacobin étoit un homme que j'avois mis avec lui pour prendre garde à ses actions. Matthioli, qui est presque aussi fou que le jacobin, se promenoit à grands pas, son manteau sur le nez, en disant qu'il n'étoit pas un dupe ; qu'il en savoit plus qu'il n'en vouloit dire. Le jacobin, qui est toujours assis sur son grabat, appuyé les deux coudes sur ses genoux, le regardoit gravement sans l'écouter. Le

signor Matthioli étant toujours persuadé que c'étoit un espion qu'on lui avoit donné, fut désabusé, lorsque le jacobin un jour descendit de son lit tout nud, et se mit à prêcher tant qu'il pouvoit des choses sans rime et sans raison. Moi et mes lieutenans avons vu toutes leurs manœuvres par un trou au-dessus de la porte.

Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Duchaunoy (Commissaire des guerres à Pignerol), May 11th, 1681.

La mort de M. le duc de Lesdiguières ayant fait vaquer le gouvernement d'Exiles, le Roi l'a donné à M. de Saint-Mars, et comme sa Majesté désire que deux des prisonniers qui sont à sa garde y soient transférés pour y être avec autant de sûreté qu'à Pignerol, l'intention de Sa Majesté est qu'avec mondit sieur de Saint-Mars vous alliez à Exiles, pour examiner l'état des lieux où ils pourront être enfermés, et les réparations qu'il y a à faire, pour y rétablir une entière sûreté, de la dépense desquelles vous m'envoyerez un mémoire, observant que ce n'est que des logements de ces deux prisonniers dont il doit faire mention, et que vous ne devez parler en aucune manière d'eux dans ledit mémoire de l'état présent du logement du gouverneur d'Exiles, ou des réparations qu'il pourra y avoir à faire.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 654, fo. 205. Printed by Iung.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, May 12th, 1681.

J'ay leu au roy vostre lettre du 3 de ce mois, par laquelle Sa Majesté ayant connu l'extrême répugnance que vous avez à accepter le commandement de la citadelle de Pignerol, a trouvé bon de vous accorder le gouvernement d'Exiles, vacant par la mort de M. le duc de Lesdiguières, où elle fera transporter ceux des prisonniers qui sont à vostre garde qu'elle croira assez de conséquence pour ne les pas mettre en d'autres mains que les vostres.

Je demande au sieur du Chaunoy d'aller visiter avec vous les bâtimens d'Exiles, et d'y faire un mémoire des réparations absolument nécessaires pour le logement des deux prisonniers

de la tour d'en bas, qui sont, je crois, les seuls que Sa Majesté fera transférer à Exiles.

Envoyez-moi un mémoire de tous les prisonniers dont vous estes chargé, et marquez-moy à costé ce que vous savez des raisons pour lesquelles ils sont arrestés.

A l'esgard des deux de la tour d'en-bas, vous n'avez qu'à les marquer de ce nom, sans y mettre autre chose.

Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, June 11th, 1681.

J'ay rendu compte au roy de vostre lettre du dernier du mois passé, et du mémoire des réparations à faire à la tour d'Exiles, que vous jugez propre à mettre les prisonniers que sa Majesté laisse à vostre garde. Le roy a trouvé bon de vous accorder mille escus, tant pour lesdites réparations que pour celles que vous jugerez à propos de faire à vostre logement : à quoy, moyennant cela, vous prendrez soin de faire travailler incessamment, comme si cette despense se faisoit à vos despens ; et lorsque la prison sera en estat, l'intention de sa Majesté est que vous y transfériez lesdits deux prisonniers, conformément à ce que je vous ay mandé par ma dernière lettre, et qu'en conséquence d'icelle, et de l'ordre qui y estoit joint, vous remettiez en ce temps-là au sieur de Villebois le commandement de la citadelle de Pignerol.

Printed by Delort.

Saint-Mars to the Abbé d'Estrades, Ambassador at Turin, June 25th, 1681.

J'ai reçu hier seulement mes provisions de gouverneur d'Exiles avec deux mille livres d'appointements ; l'on m'y conserve ma compagnie franche et deux de mes lieutenants, et j'aurai en garde deux merles que j'ai ici, lesquels n'ont pas d'autres noms que messieurs de la tour d'en bas ; Matthioli restera ici avec deux autres prisonniers. Un des mes lieutenants, nommé Villebois, les gardera. . . .

Je ne crois pas partir d'ici que devers la fin du mois qui vient ; je pourrais bien y aller de temps à autre pour y faire

quelques réparations nécessaires pour le bien du service. J'ai tous mes ordres pour m'en aller dans cet exil-là quand je jugerai à propos ; mais comme rien ne presse, et qu'il me faudra établir en ce lieu là pour y passer l'hiver avec toute ma famille et les ours, il faudra du temps pour m'y accomoder tout le mieux que je pourrai.

MSS. Estrades, at the Bibliothèque Nationale. Printed by Topin.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, July 12th, 1681.

De Pignerol au moment d'aller à Exiles.

Pour que l'on ne voie point les prisonniers [à Exiles], ils ne sortiront point de leur chambre pour entendre la messe ; et pour les tenir en plus grande sûreté, l'un de mes lieutenants couchera audessus d'eux, et il y aura deux sentinelles jour et nuit qui verront tout le tour de la tour, sans qu'eux et les prisonniers se puissent voir ni parler, ni pas même entendre ; ce seront des soldats de ma compagnie qui seront toujours posés en faction aux prisonniers. Il n'y a qu'un confesseur qui m'inquiète un peu ; mais si Monseigneur le juge à propos, je leur donnerai le curé d'Exiles, qui est un homme de bien et fort vieux, auquel je lui pourrai défendre, de la part de Sa Majesté, de ne point sçavoir quels sont ces prisonniers-là, ni leurs noms, et ce qu'ils ont été, et de ne parler jamais d'eux en nulle manière du monde, ni de recevoir de vive voix, ni par écrit, aucunes communications ni billets.

Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, July 22nd, 1681.

J'ai reçu votre lettre du 12 de ce mois, par laquelle je vois que les réparations que vous faites faire à Exiles ne vous permettront pas de partir de Pignerol avant la fin du mois prochain ; comme le service du roy pourra requérir que vous y demeuriez encore tout le mois suivant, il sera bon que vous diligentiez assez peu lesdites réparations d'Exiles pour que vous ayez prétexte de ne partir de Pignerol que vers les premiers jours du mois d'octobre, observant de vous conduire

de manière qu'il ne paroisse point d'affectation au séjour que vous y ferez.

Je vais faire expédier l'ordonnance nécessaire pour le remboursement de la dépense que vous avez faite pour vos prisonniers, et vous la recevrez au premier jour.

Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, September 20th, 1681.

Ce mot est seulement pour accuser la reception de vostre lettre du 16 de ce mois. Le Roi ne trouvera point mauvais que vous alliez voir de temps en temps le dernier prisonnier que vous avez entre les mains lorsqu'il sera estably dans sa nouvelle prison et dès qu'il sera parti de celle où vous le tenez. Sa Majesté désire que vous exécutiez l'ordre qu'elle vous a envoyé pour vostre établissement à Exiles. Je vous prie de rendre le paquet ci-joint en mains propres à M. de Richemont.

Archives Nationales K. 129. Printed by Delort.

NOTE.—This 'last prisoner' is Catinat, a sham prisoner under the name of De Richemont. His 'new prison' is Casale, the government of which he was to take up on its cession ten days later.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, November 18th, 1681.

Le roi approuve que vous choisissiez un médecin pour traiter vos prisonniers, et que vous vous serviez du sieur Vigon pour les confesser une fois l'an.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 659, fo. 197.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, December 4th, 1681.

Comme il y a toujours quelqu'un de mes deux prisonniers malades, ils me donnent autant d'occupation que jamais j'en ai eu autour de ceux que j'ai gardé.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, December 14, 1681.

Vous pouvez faire habiller vos prisonniers, mais il faut que les habits durent trois ou quatre ans à ces sortes de gens-là.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 660, fo. 383.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, March 2nd, 1682.

Comme il est important d'empêcher que les prisonniers qui sont à Exiles, que l'on nommait à Pignerol de la Tour d'en bas, n'aient aucun commerce, le Roi m'a ordonné de vous commander de les faire garder si sévèrement et de prendre de telles précautions que vous puissiez répondre à Sa Majesté qu'ils ne parleront à qui que ce soit, non seulement de dehors, mais même de la garnison d'Exiles ; je vous prie de me mander de temps en temps ce qui se passera à leur égard.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 675, fo. 36.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, March 11th, 1682.

J'ai reçu celle qu'il vous a plu me faire l'honneur de m'écrire le 27 du passé, par laquelle vous me mandez, Monseigneur, qu'il est important que mes deux prisonniers n'aient aucun commerce. Depuis le commencement que Monseigneur m'a fait ce commandement-là, j'ai gardé ces deux prisonniers, qui sont à ma garde, aussi sévèrement et exactement que j'ai fait autrefois MM. Fouquet et Lauzun, lequel ne se peut pas vanter d'avoir donné ni reçu des nouvelles, tant qu'il a été enfermé. Ceux-ci peuvent entendre parler le monde qui passe au chemin qui est au bas de la tour où ils sont ; mais eux, quand ils voudroient, ne sauroient se faire entendre ; ils peuvent voir les personnes qui seroient sur la montagne qui est devant leurs fenêtres, mais on ne sauroit les voir, à cause des grilles qui sont au-devant de leurs chambres. J'ai deux sentinelles de ma compagnie nuit et jour des deux côtés de la tour, d'une distance raisonnable, qui voient obliquement à fenêtre des prisonniers. Il leur est consigné d'entendre que personne ne leur parle, et qu'ils ne crient point par leurs fenêtres, et de faire marcher les passans qui s'arrêteroient dans le chemin ou sur le penchant de la montagne. Ma chambre étant jointe à la tour, qui n'a d'autre vue que du côté de ce chemin, fait que j'entends et vois tout, et même mes deux sentinelles, qui sont toujours alertes par ce moyen-là.

Pour le dedans de la tour, je l'ai fait séparer d'une manière

où le prêtre qui leur dit la messe ne les peut voir, à cause d'un tambour que j'ai fait faire, qui couvre leurs doubles portes. Les domestiques qui leur portent à manger, mettent ce qui soit de besoin aux prisonniers sur une table qui est là, et mon lieutenant le prend et le porte. Personne ne leur parle que moi, mon officier, M. Vigneron (le confesseur), et un médecin qui est de Pragelas, à six lieues d'ici, et en ma présence. Pour leur linge et autres nécessités, mêmes précautions que je faisois pour mes prisonniers du passé.

Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, March 31st, 1682.

J'ai reçu votre lettre du 11 de ce mois, avec le paquet qui y était joint. Le Roi ne veut pas qu'un autre lieutenant que celui qui a été accoutumé de parler à vos prisonniers ait commerce avec eux.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 675, fo. 698.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, April 18th, 1682.

Le Roi ne trouve pas mauvais que vous alliez faire la révérence à M. le duc de Savoie auparavant son départ du Piémont, après avoir mis ordre à la sûreté de vos prisonniers, de manière que pendant votre absence ils ne puissent avoir commerce avec personne et qu'il ne puisse mésarriver.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 677, fo. 251.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, 11th May, 1682.

Votre lettre du 2 de ce mois m'a été rendue. Je ne vois pas d'apparence que le Roi puisse consentir que vous vous absentiez du gouvernement que Sa Majesté a bien voulu vous donner. Ainsi vous devez faire en sorte de mettre ordre à vos affaires sans quitter la place où vous êtes.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 678, fo. 231.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, June 3rd, 1683.

Je crois que vous savez que les prisonniers qui sont à votre garde ne doivent point être confessés qu'ensuite d'un ordre du

Roi, ou dans un péril imminent de mort ; c'est ce que vous observerez, s'il vous plaît.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 693, fo. 25.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, April 16th, 1684.

Il y a longtemps que vous ne m'avez parlé de vos prisonniers. Je vous prie de me mander comment vous les gouvernez et comment ils se portent. Mandez-moi aussi ce que vous savez de la naissance du nommé La Rivière et de l'aventure par laquelle il fut mis au service de feu M. Foucquet.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre. Printed by Ravaisson.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, October 2nd, 1684.

Je vous prie de continuer à m'informer de ce qui se passera à l'égard de vos prisonniers.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 718, fo. 26.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, January 5th, 1685.

Comme il n'y a point d'apparence que le Roi veuille vous donner présentement le congé que vous demandez, vous pouvez m'écrire ce que vous avez à me dire en marquant sur l'enveloppe que vous mettrez à votre lettre qu'elle me doit être rendue en mains propres, et sur celle-là une autre avec un adresse à l'ordinaire.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 741, fo. 107.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, January 30th, 1685.

La lettre écrite de votre main le 21 de ce mois m'a été remise. J'ai vu par ce qu'elle contient ce que vous ont dit vos prisonniers, qui n'est d'aucune conséquence.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 741, fo. 575.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, March 7th, 1685.

J'ai reçu votre lettre du 23 du mois passé. Le Roi veut bien que vous alliez prendre l'air dans le lieu que vous jugerez convenable à votre santé ; mais Sa Majesté vous recommande

de donner de si bons ordres pour la sûreté des prisonniers, que personne n'ait communication avec eux pendant votre absence et qu'il n'en puisse mégarriver.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 745, fo. 127.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, June 7th, 1685.

Vous pouvez me mander en détail qu'elle est l'intention de celui de vos prisonniers qui veut faire son testament, et, en mettant en dessous de votre lettre que c'est pour m'être remise en main propre, personne ne l'ouvrira.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 747, fo. 89.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, December 23rd, 1685.

Mes prisonniers sont toujours malades et dans les remèdes. Du reste, ils sont dans une grande quiétude.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, January 9th, 1686.

J'ai reçu la lettre que vous m'avez écrite le 26 du mois passé, qui ne desiré de réponse que pour vous dire que vous auriez dû me nommer quel est celui de vos prisonniers qui est devenu hydropique.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 769, fo. 107.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, November 3rd, 1686.

Il est juste de faire confesser celui de vos deux prisonniers qui devient hydropique lorsque vous verrez apparence d'une prochaine mort. Jusque-là il ne faut pas que lui ou son camarade aient aucune communication.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 770, fo. 23. Printed by Iung.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, January 8th, 1687.

Le Roi ayant bien voulu vous accorder le gouvernement des îles Sainte-Marguerite, je vous en donne avis avec plaisir, afin que vous vous teniez prêt à vous transporter aux dites îles lorsque vous en recevrez les ordres de Sa Majesté, de laquelle l'intention est que, aussitôt que vous en aurez reçu vos provisions, vous alliez faire un tour aux dites îles, pour voir ce

qu'il y a à faire pour accommoder un lieu propre à garder sûrement les prisonniers qui sont à votre charge, dont vous m'enverrez un plan et mémoire, afin que je puisse prendre l'avis de Sa Majesté pour y faire travailler. Cependant vous retournerez à Exiles, pour attendre les ordres de Sa Majesté nécessaires pour les y conduire, ainsi que votre compagnie. Je crois qu'il est inutile que je vous recommande de prendre de telles mesures que, pendant le temps que vous serez à aller aux îles Sainte-Marguerite et à en revenir, les dits prisonniers soient gardés de manière qu'il n'en puisse mésarriver, et qu'ils n'aient commerce avec personne.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 779, fo. 114.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, January 13th, 1687.

J'ai reçu votre lettre du 5 de ce mois, par laquelle j'apprends la mort d'un de vos prisonniers.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 779, fo. 231. Printed by Iung.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, January 20th, 1687.

Je suis pénétré de la nouvelle grâce que je viens de recevoir de Sa Majesté (le gouvernement des îles Sainte-Marguerite). Si vous m'ordonnez d'y aller dans peu, je vous supplie de permettre que ce soit par le Piémont, à cause de la grande quantité de neige qu'il y a d'ici à Embrun ; et à mon retour, qui sera le plus prompt que faire se pourra, de trouver bon que j'aille, en chemin faisant, prendre congé de M. le duc de Savoye, de qui j'ai toujours reçu mille honneurs. Je donnerai si bien mes ordres, pour la garde de mon prisonnier, que je puis bien vous en répondre, Monseigneur, pour son entière sûreté, et même pour l'entretien que j'ai toujours empêché d'avoir avec mon lieutenant, à qui j'ai défendu de lui jamais parler, ce qui s'exécute ponctuellement. Si je le mène aux îles, je crois que la plus sûre voiture seroit une chaise, couverte de toile cirée, de manière qu'il auroit assez d'air, sans que personne le pût voir ni lui parler pendant la route, pas même mes soldats que je choisirai pour être proches de la chaise, qui seroit moins embarrassante qu'une litière qui peut souvent se rompre.

Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, February 1st (?), 1687.

Je vous envoie les expéditions de gouverneur des îles Sainte-Marguerite, et vous pouvez aller par le Piémont pour pouvoir faire vos compliments à M. le duc de Savoie, et éviter les neiges qu'il y a jusqu'à Embrun. Je vous prie de bien examiner dans les îles ce qu'il y a à faire pour pouvoir garder sûrement votre prisonnier, et de ne proposer que ce qui sera absolument nécessaire pour cela.

A l'égard de la manière de transférer le prisonnier, le Roi se remet à vous de vous servir de la chaise roulante fermée de la manière que vous proposez, ou de toute autre que vous jugerez à propos, pourvu que vous en puissiez répondre.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 779, fo. 506.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, March 16th, 1687.

J'ai reçu votre lettre du 2 de ce mois, le plan et le mémoire qui y étaient joints, et ce qu'il y a à faire pour bâtir la prison et le logement que vous demandez (pour rendre sûre la personne de votre prisonnier) dans l'île Sainte-Marguerite, montant à 5,026 livres que je donne ordres au trésorier de l'extraordinaire d'envoyer aux vôtres, afin que vous puissiez faire faire vous-même ce bâtiment de la manière que vous le désirez.

Vous trouverez ci-joint l'ordre du Roi nécessaire pour le départ de votre compagnie du château d'Exiles, moyennant quoi il ne tiendra qu'à vous de partir, ce que je crois que vous ne devez pas différer plus longtemps qu'aussitôt après Pâques, ne doutant pas que vous ne trouviez moyen de faire garder sûrement votre prisonnier dans l'île de Sainte-Marguerite pendant que l'on bâtira la prison que vous lui destinez, de manière qu'il ne puisse avoir commerce avec personne et qu'il ne puisse mésarriver dans les bâtiments qui sont déjà faits. Je ne vous recommande point de le faire garder soigneusement dans le chemin, puisque je suis persuadé que vous n'y manquerez pas.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 781, fo. 235.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, March 23rd, 1687.

Il y a trente jours que je suis arrivé ici, j'en ai passé vingt-six au lit, avec une fièvre continue. J'ai tant pris de quinquina en poudre, que depuis trois jours je suis sans fièvre. J'ai envoyé prendre ma litière à Toulon, pour partir d'ici le 26 du courant, et j'espère d'être à Exiles en huit jours, par la route d'Embrun et de Briançon. Dès que j'aurai reçu l'honneur de vos commandemens, Monseigneur, je me remettrai en marche avec mon prisonnier, que je vous promets de conduire ici en toute sûreté, sans que personne le voie ni lui puisse parler. Je ne lui ferai point entendre la messe depuis son départ d'Exiles jusqu'à ce qu'il soit logé dans la prison qu'on lui préparera ici, où il y aura joignant une chapelle. . . .

Je vous réponds, sur mon honneur, de la sûreté entière de mon prisonnier.

Printed by Delort.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, April 6th, 1687.

Il n'y a point d'inconvénient à ce que vous changiez le chevalier de Thézut de la prison où il est pour y mettre votre prisonnier, jusqu'à ce que celle que vous lui faites préparer soit en état de le recevoir.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 782, fo. 105.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, May 3rd, 1687.

Je suis arrivé ici le 30 du mois passé. Je n'ai resté que douze jours en chemin, à cause que mon prisonnier étoit malade, à ce qu'il disoit n'avoir pas autant d'air qu'il l'auroit souhaité ; je puis vous assurer, Monseigneur, que personne au monde ne l'a vu, et que la manière dont je l'ai gardé et conduit pendant toute ma route fait que chacun cherche à deviner qui peut être mon prisonnier. Le lit de mon prisonnier étoit si vieux, si rompu, que tout ce dont il se servoit, tant linge de table que meubles, qu'il ne valoit pas la peine d'apporter ici, l'on n'en a eu treize écus. J'ai donné à huit porteurs qui

m'ont apporté une chaise de Turin et mon prisonnier jusqu'ici, comptant la dite chaise 203 livres, que j'ai déboursées.

Printed by Iung.

Louvois to Saint-Mars, May 22nd, 1687.

J'ai reçu votre lettre du 3. C'est de l'argent comptant que l'ordre que je vous ai envoyé pour le nouveau bâtiment que vous devez faire faire aux îles Sainte-Marguerite, et vous n'avez qu'à vous adresser à M. l'intendant qui vous en ordonnera le paiement. Ainsi rien ne doit vous empêcher de commencer à faire travailler. Vous pourrez acheter les choses qui seront absolument nécessaires pour votre prisonnier, et en m'envoyant un état de ce que tout cela vous aura coûté je vous en ferai payer.

Vous trouverez ci-joint l'ordre nécessaire pour vous rembourser des 203 livres que vous avez dépensées pour votre prisonnier du château d'Exiles aux îles Sainte-Marguerite.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre vol. 783, fo. 156.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, January 8th, 1688.

Je me donneray lhonneur de vous dire comme j'ay mis mon prisonnier quy est toujours valtudinaire à son ordinaire dans l'unne des deux nouvelles prisons que j'ay fait faire suivant vos commandement. Elles sont grandes, belles et claire, et pour leur bonté je ne croy pas qu'il y en ait de plus fortes ny de plus asseurés dans l'urope, et maismement pour tout ce qui peut regarder les nouvelles de vive voix de prets et de loing, se quy ne peut trouver dans tous les lieux où j'ay esté à la garde de feu monsieur Fouquet depuis le moment qui fut aresté. Avec peu de precaution, l'on peut maisme faire promener des prisonniers dans tout l'isle, sans crainte qu'ils se puissent sauver n'y donner n'y resevoir auqunes nouvelles. Je prends la liberté, Monseigneur, de vous marquer en detail la bontté de se lieu, pour quand vous auriés des prisonniers à vouloir mettre en toute seureté avec un honneste liberté.

Dans toute sette province lon dit que le mien est monsieur de Baufort, et d'autres dissent que cest le fils de feu Cronvel.

Voisy sy joint un petit mémoire de la dépance que j'ay faite pour luy l'année dernière. Je ne le met pas en détail, pour que personne par qui il passe puisse pénétrer autre chose que ce qu'ils croient.

Printed by M. Loiseleur. Given to him by M. Mauge du Bois des Entes, *conseiller honoraire* at the Court of Orleans, who had it from his cousin Mademoiselle Mathilde de Thury.

Saint-Mars to Louvois, June 4th, 1692.

. . . . Le premier de ces ministres (protestants), qu'on a conduit ici, chante, nuit et jour, à haute voix des psaumes, exprès pour se faire connoître pour tel qu'il est. Après lui avoir défendu par plusieurs fois de discontinuer, sur peine d'une grosse discipline, que je lui ai donnée, ainsi qu'à son camarade, nommé Salves, qui a l'écriture en tête sur sa vaisselle d'étain et sur son linge, des pauvretés, pour faire entendre qu'on le retient injustement pour la pureté de la foi.

Printed by Delort.

Barbezieux to La Prade, December 27th, 1693.

Si quelqu'un des prisonniers qui sont attaqués de fièvre double, tierce et continue, viennent à mourir, il n'y a qu'à les faire enterrer comme des soldats, mais je suis persuadé qu'ils ne mourront pas encore de cette maladie. Vous n'avez qu'à brûler ce qui reste des petits morceaux de poches sur lesquelles le nommé Mattioli et son homme ont écrit ce que vous avez trouvé dans la doublure de leur justaucorps, où ils les avoient cachés.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre.

NOTE.—Mattioli and his valet must both have been ill and in bed. They took away their clothes and found the writing. Mattioli cannot have been the one who died in January 1694, for La Prade did not know this one's name.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, January 11th, 1694.

Le sieur de la Prade, à qui le Roy a confié la garde des prisonniers qui sont détenus par ordre de Sa Majesté dans le donjon de Pignerol, m'écrit que le plus ancien est mort et

qu'il n'en sait point le nom. Comme je ne doute pas que vous vous en souveniez je vous prie de me le mander en chiffres.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1242, fo. 128.

Saint-Mars answered this on January 28th, but his answer has not been preserved. The man who died seems to have been the Jacobin.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, March 20th, 1694.

The Minister warns Saint-Mars that three prisoners are coming and that he must prepare to receive them. He continues :

Vous sçavez qu'ils sont de plus de conséquence, au moins un, que ceux qui sont présentement aux îles ; vous devez, préférablement à eux, les mettre dans les lieux les plus sûrs.

Printed by Topin (incomplete and without proper reference), p. 350.

Barbezieux to La Prade, March 20th, 1694.

Le Roi ayant résolu de faire transférer aux îles Sainte-Marguerite en Provence, aux ordres de M. de Saint-Mars, les trois prisonniers d'État qui sont à votre garde dans le donjon de la citadelle de Pignerol, Sa Majesté m'a ordonné de vous écrire qu'elle vous a choisi pour les conduire les uns après les autres, c'est-à-dire que, quand vous en aurez mené un, vous reviendrez en prendre un autre. J'adresse, pour cet effet, à M. le Comte de Tessé l'ordre de Sa Majesté nécessaire pour que M. le Marquis d'Herleville laisse partir du donjon de Pignerol les dits prisonniers, et une lettre de cachet pour le dit sieur de Saint-Mars que vous lui remettrez avec le premier de ces prisonniers. M. de Tessé pourvoira aux escortes et vous fera donner l'argent que vous lui demanderez pour la dépense du voyage. Suivant les intentions du Roi je lui explique par la lettre que je viens de lui écrire, vous observerez de choisir quelque personne sage pour prendre en votre absence le soin des deux prisonniers qui resteront pendant que vous conduirez le premier ; vous exécuterez de même pour le deuxième prisonnier, tant que vous partirez avec le second.

Vous savez de quelle conséquence il est que ces gens-là ne parlent et n'écrivent à personne pendant la route ; le Roi vous recommande d'y tenir régulièrement la main, et qu'il n'y ait que vous qui leur donniez à manger comme vous avez fait depuis qu'ils ont été confiés à vos soins.

Vous ne devez partir de Pignerol avec le premier prisonnier que lorsque deux sergents de la compagnie de Saint-Mars qu'il y doit envoyer y seront arrivés, lesquels il doit choisir pour vous aider à cette conduite.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1243, fo. 200.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, August 13th, 1691.

(Written fifteen days only after the death of Louvois, July 29th.)

Votre lettre du 26 de ce mois passé m'a été rendue. Lorsque vous aurez quelque chose à me mander du prisonnier qui est sous votre garde depuis vingt ans, je vous prie d'usèr des mêmes précautions que vous faisiez quand vous les donniez à M. de Louvois.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1034, fo. 246.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, February 9th, 1694.

J'ai reçu la lettre que vous avez pris la peine de m'écrire le 21 du mois passé. Je vous puis assurer que personne ne l'a vue que moi, et quand vous avez quelque chose de secret à me mander, vous pouvez en user de la même manière.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1242, fo. 96.

De Maisonsel¹ to Barbezieux, Pinerol, April 7th, 1694.

Je pars a ce moment pour conduire en seureté quatre prisonniers d'Estat qui sont à la citadelle de Pinerol, je les meneray jusqu'à Briançon et les remettray ensuite à la conduite du sieur de la Prade major de la ditte citadelle avec les officiers et les vingt sergents à cheval que M. le comte de Tessé a détachés de cette garnison pour les conduire aux isles.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1272, fo. 125.

NOTE.—The dispatches of March 20th say three only. The fourth will be the valet of Mattioli.

¹ Captain of the escort sent by De Tessé.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, May 10th, 1694.

J'ai reçu la lettre que vous avez pris la peine de m'écrire le 29 du mois passé ; vous pouvez, suivant que vous le proposez, faire mettre dans la prison voûtée le valet du prisonnier qui est mort, observant de le faire garder aussi bien que les autres, sans communication de vive voix ni par écrit avec qui que ce soit.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1245, fo. 139.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, December 20th, 1695.

Comme il est quelquefois arrivé que, par maladie, ou autrement, vous n'avez pu visiter les prisonniers qui ont été commis à votre garde, je vous prie de me mander qui a été chargé de ce soin à votre défaut, comment l'on en a usé en ces temps-là, afin que le Roi puisse donner ses ordres en conformité lorsque le cas arrivera.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1303, fo. 108.

Saint-Mars to Barbezieux, January 6th, 1696.

Vous me commandes de vous dire comment l'on en euz quand je suis absent, ou malade, pour les visites et précautions qui se font journellement aux prisonniers qui sont commis à ma garde.

Mes deux lieutenants servent à manger aux heures réglées insy qu'ils me l'ont veu pratiquer, et que je fais encore tres souvent lorsque je me porte bien ; et voicy comment, Monseigneur. Le premier venu de mes lieutenants quy prend les clefs de la prison de mon ensien prisonnier par où l'on commence, il ouvre les trois portes et entre dans la chambre du prisonnier quy luy remet honnestement les plats et assiettes qu'il a mis lui-même sur les autres, pour les donner entre les mains du lieutenant quy ne fait que de sortir deux portes pour les remettre à un de mes sergents qui le resoit pour les porter sur une table à deux pas de là, ou est le second lieutenant quy visite tout ce quy entre et sort de la prison, et voir s'il n'y a rien d'écrit sur les vaisselles : et après que l'on luy a tout donné le nésésaire, l'on fait la visite dedant et dessous son lit, et de là aux grilles de fenestres de sa chambre, et aux

lieux, insy que par toute sa chambre, et fort souvent sur lui ; après luy avoir demandé fort sivillement s'il n'a pas besoin d'autre chose, l'on ferme les portes pour aller en faire toute autant aux autres prisonniers. Deux fois la semaine l'on leurs fait changer de linge de table, insy que de chemises et linges dont ils se servent, que l'on leurs donne et retire par compte après les avoir tous bien visités.

Lon peut estre fort atrapé seur le linge qu'on sort et entre pour le service des prisonniers qui sont de consideration, comme j'en ay eu qui ont voulu corompre par argen les blanchiseuze qui m'ont avoué quels navoit peu faire ce que lon leurs avoit dit, attenden que je fesois moullier tout leurs linge en sortant de leurs chambre, et lorsqu'il étoit blanc et à demy sec, la blanchiseuse venoit le passer et detirer chez moy en présence d'un de mes lieutenant quy enfermoit les paniers dans un coffre jeusque a se que l'on le remit aux vallets de messieurs les prisonniers. Dans les bougies il y a beaucoup à se méfier ; ien ay trouvé où il avoit du papier au lieu de mèche en la rompant, ou quand lon s'en sert. J'en envoie ageter à Turin à des boutiques non affectée. Il est ausy très dangereux de sortir du ruban de ches un prisonnier seur lequel il écrit comme seur du linge sans quon sen aperçoive.

Feu monsieur Fouquet fesoit de beau et bon papier, seur lequel je luy laisois ecrire, et apres jalois le prendre la nuit dans un petit sachet quil avoit couseu au fond de son au de chose que j'envoie à feu monseigneur votre père.

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A piece has here been torn off, probably by accident.

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Pour dernière précausion lon visite de temps à autre les prisonniers de jour et de nuit à des heures non réglées, ou souvent l'on leurs trouve quil ont ecrit seur de mauvais linge quy ny a queux qui le saures lire, comme vous avez veu par ceux que je eu lhonneur de vous adresser.

Printed by Loiseleur, who obtained it in the same way as that of Jan. 8th, 1688.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, January 15th, 1696.

J'ai reçu la lettre que vous m'avez écrite la 6 de ce mois, sur la manière dont vous gouvernez les prisonniers qui sont commis à votre garde. J'en ai rendu compte au Roi, qui a été bien aise de savoir les mesures et les precautions que vous prenez sur cela, à quoi Sa Majesté n'a pas jugé à propos de rien ajouter, et Elle vous recommande seulement de continuer à les faire observer.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1339, fo. 122.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, November 17th, 1697.

Vous n'avez point d'autre conduite à tenir à l'égard de tous ceux qui sont confiés à votre garde, que de continuer à veiller à leur sûreté, sans vous expliquer à qui que ce soit ce qu'a fait votre ancien prisonnier.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1392, fo. 171.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, June 15th, 1698.

J'ai été longtemps sans répondre à la lettre que vous avez pris la peine de m'écrire le 8 du mois passé, parce que le Roi ne m'a pas expliqué plus tôt ses intentions. Présentement je vous dirai que Sa Majesté a vu avec plaisir que vous soyez déterminé à venir à la Bastille pour en être gouverneur. Vous pourrez disposer toutes choses pour être prêt à partir lorsque je vous le manderai, et emmener avec vous en toute sûreté votre ancien prisonnier.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1431, fo. 126.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, July 19th, 1698.

Le Roi trouve bon que vous partiez des îles Sainte-Marguerite pour venir à la Bastille, avec votre ancien prisonnier, prenant vos precautions pour empêcher qu'il ne soit vu ni connu de personne. Vous pourrez écrire par avance au lieutenant de Sa Majesté du château de la Bastille, de tenir une chambre prête pour pouvoir mettre ce prisonnier à votre arrivée.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1432, fo. 129.

Barbezieux to Saint-Mars, August 4th, 1698.

J'ai reçu la lettre que vous avez pris la peine de m'écrire le 24 du mois passé, par laquelle vous me marquez les précautions que vous devez prendre pour la conduite de votre prisonnier. J'en ai rendu compte au Roi, qui les a approuvées et trouve bon que vous partiez avec lui, ainsi que je vous l'ai mandé par une de mes précédentes, que je ne doute pas que vous n'ayez reçue présentement.

Sa Majesté n'a pas jugé nécessaire de faire expédier l'ordre que vous demandez pour avoir des logements sur votre route jusqu'à Paris, et il suffira que vous vous logiez, en payant le plus commodément et le plus sûrement qu'il sera possible dans les lieux où vous jugerez à propos de rester.

MSS. Dépôt de la Guerre, vol. 1422, fo. 56.

Registre de Du Jonca, Sept. 18th, 1698.

Du judy 18 de septembre, 1698, à trois heures après midy, monsieur de Saint-Mars, gouverneur du château de la Bastille, est arive pour sa première entrée, venant de son gouvernement des illes Sainte-Marguerite Honorat aient mené avecque luy dans sa litière un ensien prisonnier qu'il avet à Pignerol, lequel il fait tenir toujours masque dont le nom ne se dit pas et l'aient fait mettre en desendant de sa litière dans la première chambre de la tour de la Basinière en atendant la nuit pour le mettre et mener moymesme à neuf heures du soir avec M. de Rosarges un des sergens que monsieur le gouverneur a mené dans la troisième chambre seul de la tour de la Bretaudière que j'aves fait meubler de toutes choses quelques jours avant son arrivée en aient reseu l'hordre de M. de Saint-Mars lequel prisonnier sera servy et sounie par M. de Rosarges que monsieur le gouverneur norira.

Pontchartrain to Saint-Mars, November 3rd, 1698.

Le roy trouve bon que vostre prisonnier de Provence se confesse et communie toutes les fois que vous le jugerez à propos.

Depping, 'Collection de Documents Inédits,' ii. p. 752.

Register of the Bastille.

Noms et qualités des prisonniers	Dates de leur entrées	Noms de MM. les secrétaires d'Etat qui ont contre-signé les ordres	Tome	Page	Dates de leurs morts	Tome	Page	Motif de la détention des prisonniers	Observations
Ancien prisonnier de Pignerol, obligé de porter toujours un masque de velours noir, d'ont on n'a jamais sçu le nom ni ses qualités	18 Septembre, 1698, à 8 heures après-midy		Du Jonca	V. 87	le 19 Novembre, 1708	Du Jonca	V. 80	On ne l'a jamais sçu	

This leaf was missing from the Register itself. The above, which appears accurate, is supplied from a supposed copy. On the genuineness of this consult Iung, *La vérité sur le Masque de Fer*, p. 56.

Du Jonca's Journal, April 30th, 1701.

Du samedi, 30 avril, sur les neuf heures du soir, M. Aumont le jeune est venu, ayant mené et remis un prisonnier, le nommé M. Maranville, sous le nom de Ricarville, qui a été officier de guerre, mécontent, parlant trop, et mauvais sujet ; lequel j'ai reçu, suivant les ordres du roi, expédiés par M. le comte de Pontchartrain ; lequel j'ai fait mettre en compagnie, avec le nommé Tirmon, dans la seconde chambre de la tour de la Bertaudière, avec l'ancien prisonnier, tous les deux bien renfermés.

Bibl. de l'Arsenal MS. 5133, f. 60. Printed by Funck-Brentano, *Légendes et Archives de la Bastille*, p. 95.

Registre de Du Jonca, Nov. 19th, 1703.

Du mesme jour, lundy 19^e de novembre 1703, le prisonnier inconeu touiours masque d'un masque de velours noir, que M. de Saint-Mars gouverneur a mené avecque luy en venant des illes Sainte Marguerite, qu'il gardet depuis lontamps, lequel s'étant trouvé hier un peu mal en sortant de la messe il est mort le jourd'huy sur les dix heures du soir, sans avoir eu un grande maladie, il ne se put pas moins. M. Giraut notre homonier le confessa hier. Surpris de sa mort, il na point reseu les sacremens, et notre homonier la exorté un moment avent que de mourir, et le prisonnier gardé depuis si lontamps a esté entéré le mardy à quatre hures de l'apres midy, 20^e novembre, dans le semetière Saint Paul, noltre paroisse. Sur le registre mortuer on a done un nom aussy inconeu que M. de Rosarges major et Arreil sieurgien qui hont signé sur le registre.

Je apris du depuis con lavet nome sur le registre, M. de Marchiel, qu'on a païé 40l. danteremant.

Extract from Register of St. Paul, Nov. 20th, 1703.

Le 19^{me} Marchioly, agé de quarante six ans ou environ est decédé dans la Bastile, du quel le corps a esté enhumé dans Cimetière de St. Paul sa paroisse le 20. du present en presence de Monsieur Rosage majeur de la Bastile et de M^r Reglhe chirurgien majeur de la Bastile qui ont signé.

Rosarges.

REILHE.

Statement of M. de Formanoir, 1768.

This de Formanoir was great-nephew of Blainvilliers (or de Formanoir), who was the nephew and lieutenant of Saint-Mars. M. de Formanoir was Saint-Mars' heir at Palteau. He wrote to a M. Fréron in 1768 as follows :

‘Comme il paroît par la lettre de M. de Saint-Foix que l'homme au masque de fer exerce toujours l'imagination de nos écrivains je vais vous faire part de ce que je sais de ce prisonnier. Il n'étoit connu aux îles Sainte-Marguerite et à la Bastille que sous le nom de ‘la Tour.’ Le gouverneur et les autres officiers avoient des égards pour lui ; il obtenoit d'eux tout ce qu'ils pouvoient accorder à un prisonnier. Il se promenoit souvent ayant un masque sur le visage. Ce n'est plus que depuis que le *Siècle de Louis XIV* de M. Voltaire a paru, que j'ai ouï dire que ce masque étoit de fer, et à ressorts : peut-être a-t-on oublié de me parler de cette circonstance ; mais il n'avoit ce masque que lorsqu'il sortoit pour prendre l'air, ou qu'il étoit obligé de paroître devant quelque prince étranger. Le sieur de Blainvilliers, officier d'infanterie, qui avoit accès chez M. de Saint-Mars, gouverneur des îles Sainte-Marguerite et depuis de la Bastille, m'a dit plusieurs fois que le sort de ‘la Tour’ ayant excité sa curiosité, pour la satisfaire il avoit pris les habits et les armes d'un soldat qui devoit être en sentinelle dans une galerie, sous les fenêtres de la chambre qu'occupoit ce prisonnier aux îles Sainte-Marguerite ; que de là il l'avoit très bien vu ; qu'il n'avoit point de masque ; qu'il étoit blanc de visage, grand et bien fait de corps, ayant la jambe un peu trop fournie par le bas, et les cheveux blancs, quoiqu'il ne fût que dans la force de l'âge. Il avoit passé cette nuit-là presque entière à se promener dans sa chambre. Blainvilliers ajoutait qu'il étoit toujours vêtu de brun, qu'on lui donnoit de beau linge et des livres ; que le gouverneur et les officiers restoient devant lui debout découverts jusqu'à ce qu'il les fit couvrir et asseoir ; qu'ils alloient souvent lui tenir compagnie et manger avec lui.

En 1698 M. de Saint-Mars passa du gouvernement des îles à celui de la Bastille. Lorsqu'il se mit en route pour en

aller prendre possession, il séjourna avec son prisonnier à sa terre de Palteau. L'homme au masque arriva dans une litière qui précédoit celle de M. de Saint-Mars; ils étoient accompagnés de plusieurs gens à cheval. Les paysans allèrent au devant de leur seigneur. M. de Saint-Mars mangea avec son prisonnier, qui avoit le dos opposé aux croisées de la salle à manger qui donnent sur la cour. Les paysans que j'ay interrogés ne purent voir s'il mangeoit avec son masque, mais ils observèrent très bien que M. de Saint-Mars, qui étoit à table vis-à-vis de lui, avoit deux pistolets à côté de son assiette. Ils n'avoient pour être servès qu'un seul valet de chambre (Antoine Ru), qui alloit chercher les plats, qu'on lui apportoit dans l'antichambre, fermant soigneusement sur lui la porte de la salle-à-manger. Lorsque le prisonnier traversoit la cour, il avoit toujours son masque sur le visage. Les paysans remarquèrent qu'on lui voyoit les dents et les lèvres; qu'il étoit grand et avoit les cheveux blancs. M. de Saint-Mars coucha dans un lit qu'on lui avoit dressé auprès de celui de l'homme au masque. M. de Blainvilliers m'a dit que lors de sa mort arrivée en 1704, on l'enterra secrètement à Saint Paul, et que l'on mit dans le cercueil des drogues pour consumer le corps. Je n'ai point oui dire qu'il eût aucun accent étranger.

BOOK II.

DOCUMENTS CHIEFLY CONCERNING JAMES DE LA
CLOCHE.

Charles II. to Pope Alexander VII., requesting the promotion to the Cardinalate of M. d'Aubigny, 1662.

1°. Sa Majesté sollicite cette promotion pour l'avantage de son royaume, et afin de donner au parti catholique un chef autorisé, étroitement uni au souverain par les liens du sang, et sur qui Elle puisse compter en toute circonstance, avec la plus complète sécurité. Le roi, pour nous servir de ses propres paroles, voit dans l'élévation au cardinalat de M. l'abbé d'Aubigny 'une condition essentielle à la bonne intelligence qui doit régner entre le Pape et lui ; il juge cette mesure de la plus haute importance pour le bien général de ses sujets catholiques romains dans toute l'étendue de ses domaines.'

2°. Le cardinal une fois nommé, Sa Majesté s'engage à l'entretenir avec tout l'éclat convenable à sa dignité et à son titre de parent du roi.

3°. Elle ordonne à son ministre de n'entamer aucune autre affaire avant d'avoir obtenu satisfaction entière relativement à la promotion de Mgr. d'Aubigny. En cas de refus, l'envoyé devra prendre congé et s'en revenir, sans dire un mot des autres points que Sa Majesté l'avait chargé de négocier.

Catherine of Braganza to Card. Orsini, Oct. 25, 1662.

Mon cousin,—Parmy la joye que j'ay sujet d'avoir, je ne laisse pas d'être sensiblement touchée de l'étrange estat de l'Eglise et aux Royaumes du Roy mon frère, et dans ceux-cy. Personne ne sait mieux que vous ce qui est du Portugal,

puisque vous en avez si généreusement entrepris la protection ; mais je puis vous dire que j'appréhenderois beaucoup les mauvaises suites du chagrin du Roy mon seigneur et époux, et de ses ministres, si la cour de Rome persistoit à lui refuser la faveur qu'il demande pour son parent monsieur d'Aubigny, mon grand-aumônier. Je me remets au sieur Bellings que j'envoie pour assurer Sa Sainteté de mes obéissances, de vous exposer toutes choses au large, et vous prie de lui donner entière créance.

Je suis,

Mon cousin,

Votre bien affectionnée cousine,

CATHERINE R.

Henrietta Marie to Card. Orsini, Oct. 30, 1662.

Mon cousin,—Je vous prie de vouloir bien favoriser de votre protection et appuy ce que doit négocier de ma part dans la cour de Rome le sieur Bellings, porteur de la présente, particulièrement ce qui regarde mon cousin monsieur d'Aubigny, grand-aumônier de Madame ma belle-fille. Sa proche parenté au Roy Monsieur mon fils et ses autres mérites me donnent lieu d'espérer une heureuse issue de ce que je demande avec une instance très-grande en sa faveur à Sa Sainteté. Les soins que vous y apporterez m'obligeront extrêmement ; et, aux occasions je ne manqueray pas de vous donner des preuves de ma reconnaissance, estant,

Mon cousin,

Votre bien bonne cousine,

HENRIETTE-MARIE R.

Richard Bellings to Father Courtenay, S.J. Nov. 1662.

J'obéirai ponctuellement aux ordres du Cardinal Barbérino, et j'aurai soin d'arriver à temps pour rendre visite au Cardinal d'Aragon. Le roi son maître, si je suis bien instruit, souhaite passionément l'amitié du nôtre ; et je ne manquerai pas de faire entendre à Son Éminence que rien ne conduira plus efficacement à ce but qu'un loyal service dans l'affaire que je

suis venu traiter. Je reviens de chez le Cardinal Chigi : il m'a reçu avec une politesse parfaite, et m'a donné de bonnes espérances que son concours nous est assuré. Mille grâces au Père Vicaire pour toutes ses bontés.

Je suis

R. BELLINGS.

*Certificate by Charles II. of James de la Cloche's parentage,
Sept. 27, 1665.*

Charles, par la grâce de Dieu Roy d'Angleterre, de France, d'Écosse et d'Hibernie, confessons et tenons pour nostre fils naturel le sieur Jacques Stuart qui, par nostre ordre et commandement, a vescu en France et autres pays jusques à mil six cent soixante cinq où nous avons daigné prendre soin de Luy. Depuis, la même année, s'étant trouvé à Londres de nostre volonté expresse et pour raison, Luy avons commandé de vivre sous auttre nom encore, sçavoir, de la Cloche du Bourg de Jarzais. Auquel, pour raisons importantes qui regardent la paix du Royaume que nous avons toujours recherchée, deffendons de parler qu'après nostre mort [*du secret de sa naissance*]. En ce temps, Luy soit lors permis de présenter au parlement cette nostre déclaration que, de plein gré et avec équité, nous Luy donnons à sa requeste, et en sa langue, pour lui oster occasion de la monstrier à qui que ce soit pour en avoir l'interprétation.—A Wthall, le 27 de septembre 1665. Esery et signé de nostre main, et cacheté du cachet ordinaire de nos lettres sans auttre façon.

CHARLES.

Charles II. Certificate. Feb. 7, 1667.

Charles, par la grâce de Dieu roy d'Angleterre, de France, d'Écosse et d'Hibernie. Le sieur Jacques Stuart que nous avons ja reconnu par cy-devant pour nostre fils naturel, vivant sous le nom de La Cloche, nous ayant représenté que, survivant après nostre décès, il pourroit estre en peine de sa vie s'il n'est pas reconnu de nostre parlement, comme pour les auttres

difficultés qui peuvent arriver en cette affaire ; pour cet effet, condescendants à ses requestes, avons treuvé bon de luy assigner et laisser sur nostre domaine, si tel est le bon plaisir de nostre successeur à la couronne et de nostre parlement, la somme de 500*l.* sterling par chacun an. Duquel legs il ne luy sera loisible de jouir sinon en tant qu'il demeurera à Londres, vivant dans la religion de ses pères et liturgie anglaise.—A Wthall, le 7 febv. 1667. Escry et scellé de notre main propre.

CHARLES.

Charles II. to the General of the Jesuits, Aug. 3rd, 1668.

Monsieur et révérendissime Père nous escrivons celle-cy à vostre révérendissime paternité come à une personne que nous croyons estre grandement prudente et judicieuse, puisque la première charge qu'elle a d'un Institut si fameux ne nous le peut autrement persuader. Nous lui parlons francès, commun à toutes personnes de qualité, que nous croyons que votre R. paternité n'ignorera pas, plustost qu'en un pauvre latin dont nous ne pourions que malaisément nous servir pour estre entendu, nostre but principal de cecy estant qu'aucun Anglès n'y puisse mettre le nez pour lui servir d'interprette, ce qui autrement pourrait nous estre grandement préjudiciable ; pour la raison que nous voulons qu'elle soit secrette entre vous et nous.

Et pour commencer, vostre R. paternité sçaura qu'il y a longtems que, parmy les embarras de la couronne, nous prions Dieu de nous faire naistre l'occasion de pouvoir trouver une seule personne dans nos royaumes de qui nous peussions nous fier touchant l'affaire de nostre salut, sans donner ombrage à nostre cour que nous fussions catholiques. Et quoy qu'il y ayt eu icy une multitude de prestres, tant au service de la reyne dont une partie a habité dans nos palais de Saint-James et de Sommerset-House, que dispersés dans toute nostre ville de Londres, touttefois nous ne pouvons nous servir d'aucun, pour l'ombrage que nous pourions donner à nostre cour par la conversation de telles gens qui, quelques déguisemens d'habits qu'ils puissent avoir, sont aussi tost connus pour ce qu'ils

sont. Toutefois, entre tant de difficultés, il semble que la Providence de Dieu a pourveu et secondé nos désirs nous faisant naistre à la religion catholique un fils auquel seul nous pouvons nous fier dans une affaire si délicate : et bien que plusieurs personnes peut-estre plus versées dans les mystères de la religion catholique qu'il n'est pas encore, se pourrest treuver pour nostre service en ce rencontre, nous ne pouvons toutefois nous servir d'autres que de luy qui sera toujours assez capable pour nous administrer en secret les sacrements de la confession et de la communion que nous désirons recevoir au plustost.

Ce nostre fils est un jeune cavalier que nous sçavons que vous avez receu à Rome parmy vous, soubz le nom du sieur de la Cloche de Jersay, pour qui nous avons tousjours eu une tendresse particulière, tant à cause qu'il nous est né, lorsque nous n'avions guères plus de seize ou dix-sept ans, d'une jeune dame des plus qualifiées de nos royaumes (plustost par fragilité de nostre première jeunesse que par malice), que à cause aussi du naturel excellent que nous avons toujours remarqué en luy, et de l'éminente doctrine où il s'est avancé par nostre moyen ; ce qui nous fait d'autant plus estimer son rangement à la religion catholique, que nous sçavons qu'il l'a fait par jugement, raison et science. Plusieurs raisons considérables et concernantes la paix de nos royaumes, nous ont empesché jusques à présent de le reconnestre publiquement pour nostre fils ; mais ce sera pour peu de temps, parce que nous sommes maintenant en dessein de faire en sorte de le reconnestre publiquement devant peu d'années, l'ayant cependant, en 1665, pourveu d'asseurances nécessaires en cas que nous vinssions à mourir, pour s'en pouvoir servir en temps et lieu. Et comme il n'est icy connu en aucune façon, fors des reynes, cette affaire s'estant passée fort secrettement ; nous pouvons en toute seureté converser avec luy et exercer en secret les mystères de la religion catholique, sans donner ombrage à qui que ce soit de nostre cour que nous soyons catholique, ce que nous ne pouvons faire avec aucun autre missionneur, tant aussy que pour la confiance que nous avons

de lui ouvrir nostre conscience avec toute liberté et sincérité, comme à une partie de nous-mêmes. Ainsi nous voyons que, combien qu'il nous soit né dans nostre plus tendre jeunesse contre les ordres de Dieu, le mesme Dieu s'en veult servir pour nostre salut, appartenant à luy seul de sçavoir tirer le bien du mal.

Nous croyons avoir expliqué suffisamment à vostre révérendissime paternité la nécessité que nous avons de luy ; et si vostre R. paternité nous escrit, elle confiera ses lettres à nostre seul fils quand il viendra nous trouver. Car, bien que nous ne doutions point qu'elle ne treuvast assez de voyes secrettes pour ce faire, toutefois elle nous désobligerait grandement de confier ses lettres à auttres qu'à lui seul, pour plusieurs raisons considérables dont vostre R. paternité en peut conjecturer une partie, que particulièrement pour les accidents qui nous en pouroist arriver, comme il fut en hasard de nous advenir en la réception d'une lettre que nous eusmes de Rome pour la réponse d'une que nous avions escry au défunt Pape, et quoy qu'elle nous fust représentée avec toutes les circonstances nécessaires et par personne catholique, toutefois ce ne peut être avec tant de prudence que nous ne fussions soubçonnés d'intelligence avec le Pape par les plus clairvoyants de nostre cour. Mais, ayant trouvé le moyen d'étouffer le soubçon que l'on commençoit d'avoir que nous fussions catholique, nous fusmes obligés, crainte de ne le faire renaistre dans les esprits, de consentir, aux occasions, à plusieurs choses tournant au désavantage de plusieurs catholiques de nostre royaume d'Hybernïe : ce qui est cause encore que, bien nous eussions escry assez secrètement à Sa Sainteté pour nostre rangement à l'Église catholique, au mesme temps que nous prions Sa Sainteté de faire cardinal nostre très-cher cousin le milord d'Aubigny, dont nous fusmes refusés pour bonnes raisons, n'avons peu poursuyvre nostre pointe.

Et (*Aussi*) quoyque la reyne de Suède soit très-prudente et sage, toutefois c'est assez que ce soit une femme pour nous mettre en crainte qu'elle ne puisse garder un secret ; et comme elle croit sçavoir seule la naissance de nostre fils bien

aymé, nous luy avons escry derechef et nous l'avons confirmée dans son opinion ; ce qui fait que vostre R^{me} paternité luy tesmoignera en l'occasion n'avoir aucune connoissance de sa naissance, au cas qu'elle luy demande. Comme aussi nous prions vostre R^{me} paternité de ne luy tesmoigner, ny à quelque autre personne que ce soit, le dessein que nous avons d'estre catholiques, ny que nous fassions venir nostre fils pour ce sujet. Si la reyne de Suède s'interoge où il est allé, vostre R^{me} paternité sçaura trouver quelque prétexte, ou qu'il est allé en mission en nostre isle de Jersé, ou en quelque autre partie de nos royaumes, ou quelque autre prétexte, jusques à ce que nous fussions derechef sçavoir nos désirs et volontés sur ces matières à vostre R^{me} paternité.

Nous la prions donc de nous envoyer au plus tost nostre très-cher et bien aymé fils, c'est-à-dire, au premier beau temps que cette saison ou l'autre le permettront. Nous croyons que vostre R^{me} paternité est trop zélée pour le salut des âmes et qu'elle a trop de respect pour les testes couronnées, pour ne pas nous accorder une demande si juste. Nous avons eu quelque pensée d'écrire à Sa Sainteté et lui découvrir ce que nous avons dans l'âme, et par mesme moyen la prier de nous l'envoyer ; mais nous avons creu qu'il suffisoit pour cette fois de nous déclarer à vostre R^{me} paternité, réservant à une autre occasion que nous ferons naistre le plus tost que nous pourrons, à escrire et nous déclarer au pape par un courier très secret et aposté de nostre part.

Si nostre cher et bien aymé fils n'est prestre, et s'il ne peu pas l'estre sans faire sçavoir publiquement son véritable nom et sa naissance, ou pour autres circonstances (ce que nous disons pour ne sçavoir pas vostre manière d'agir en ces rencontres), en ce cas, qu'il ne se fasse plustost point prestre à Rome que de rien dire aux évesques ou prestres qui il est, mais qu'il passe par Paris et se présente à nostre très-cher cousin le roy de France, ou, s'il ayme mieux, à nostre très honorée sœur Madame la duchesse d'Orléans à qui il tesmoignera de nostre part nostre bon désir en toute seureté. Ils sçavent assez ce que nous avons dans l'âme, et connestront

assez nostre très cher et bien aymé fils aux marques que nous luy avons données à Londres en 1665 ; et le voyant catholique, ils treuveront et auront le pouvoir de le faire faire prestre, sans que l'on sçache qui il est et avec tout le secret possible, comme nous nous persuadons. Si ce n'est que, sans tant de détours, il ayme mieux venir à nous sans estre prestre, ce qui sera peut-estre le mieux, puisque nous pourons faire la mesme chose par le moyen de la reyne nostre très honorée mère ou de la reyne régente (régnante) qui pourront avoir à leur volonté évesques, missionnaires ou autres, pour faire la fonction, sans que l'on sçache et s'aperçoive de quoyque ce soit. Nous disons cecy au cas qu'il se treuvast quelques difficultés de ce faire à Rome.

Et bien que nous fassions venir à nous nostre très cher fils, ce n'est point touttefois notre dessein de le retirer de vostre Société. Bien au contraire, nous sommes ravis qu'il en soit toute sa vie, si Dieu luy inspire cet estat ; et après avoir mis ordre à nostre conscience par son moyen, nous ne l'empescherons pas de retourner à Rome pour y vivre selon l'Institut qu'il a embrassé ; et mesme dans le temps qu'il sera à nostre service, nous ne l'empescherons pas de poursuyvre, s'il veult, parmy les vostres qui sont en nos royaumes, la vie encommencée conforme à l'estat religieux qu'il a embrassé ; pourveu que ce ne soit pas à Londres, mais en quelque ville ou lieu non trop esloigné de notre ville de Londres, affin que quand nous en avons besoin, il puisse venir avec plus de promptitude et facilité. Et la raison pourquoy nous ne voulons pas qu'il reste à Londres parmy les vostres, est à cause du danger qu'il ne fust soubçonné pour jésuite, le voyant entrer dans les lieux où résident les vostres qui se sçavent assez de plusieurs, ce qui pourrait tourner à nostre préjudice. Ou bien nous sommes contents, aprez estre absouz par luy de l'hérésie, et nous estre réconciliez à Dieu et à l'Église, qu'il s'en retourne à Rome pour y mener la vie religieuse qu'il avait entrepris, en attendans nouveaux ordres de nostre part ; ce que nous treuvons plus à propos, et nous croyons que vostre révérendissime paternité sera de nostre

avis et conseil en cette dernière pensée. Ainsy faisant, quand il aura esté icy quelques sepmaines ou mois, nous le renverrons à Rome sous la conduite de vostre R^{me} paternité, affin de se rendre plus habile parmy vous pour nostre service. Et dans le peu de temps qu'il sera à Londres, quand il abouchera quelqu'un des vostres, qu'il se garde bien de dire le sujet pourquoy il est venu. Il peut dire qu'il a quelques affaires d'importance en nostre cour, dont vostre R^{me} paternité et luy doivent avoir seuls connessance.

Cependant, bien que nous ne puissions pas tesmoigner ouvertement à toute vostre illustre Société l'affection et la bonne volonté que nous luy avons, cela n'empesche pas que vostre révérendissime paternité ne nous face sçavoir par nostre très cher et bien aymé fils, s'il y a quelque endroit où nous la puissions aider, ce que nous ferons d'autant plus volontiers que nous sçavons que tout ce que nous pouvons contribuer, sera employé au service de Dieu, pour la rémission de nos offenses. En attendant, nous recommandons à vos prières et nos royaumes et nous qui sommes

CHARLES, roy d'Angleterre.

A Wthall, ce 3 d'août, 1668.

Charles II. to the General of the Jesuits, Aug. 29th, 1668.

Monsieur et révérendissime Père, nous envoyons en grandissime diligence et grandissime secret un exprès à Rome pour porter deux lettres, l'une pour vostre révérendissime paternité, affin que nostre très-cher et bien aymé fils parte au plus tost; l'autre à la reyne de Suède, ayant commandé à l'exprès d'attendre sa majesté en quelque ville que ce soit d'Italie, par où elle doit passer, ne voulant pas mesme que l'exprès susdit comparoisse à vostre maison, crainte d'estre connu par quelques-uns de vos religieux qui pouroist estre Anglès. Estant personne de qualité, nous lui avons deffendu pareillement de tarder plus d'un jour à Rome, crainte d'estre connu de quelque Anglès qui pouroist estre à Rome.

Nous dirons donc à vostre révérendissime paternité que,

depuis la première que nous luy avons escry, nous avons receu nouvelles certaines que la reyne de Suède retourne à Rome contre la croyance que nous en avions, ce qui ne nous a pas peu embarrassé en raison de l'affaire de nostre salut. C'est pourquoi, en cet accident nouveau, ayant pris conseil avec les reynes, nous avons déterminé d'escire en haste à la reyne de Suède, lui dissimulant et faisant accroire, sçavoir, que nostre très-cher et bien aymé fils nous a représenté de luy vouloir assigner quelque chose de stable pendant sa vie, affin qu'au cas qu'il ne peult pas poursuyvre sa vie religieuse encommencée, estant maintenant catholique, il ayt où recourir pour vivre ; et que, quand mesme il la pouroit poursuyvre, il nous prioit de lui fonder quelque chose pour pouvoir en disposer selon sa dévotion ; ce que nous luy avons accordé : mais que ne pouvant pas faire cela à Rome, nous luy avons ordonné de s'en aller à Paris treuver quelques correspondants de nostre part, et puis de là, à Jersé et à Hanton, où il recevra de nous 40 ou 50,000 écus pour se faire un fonds, ou pour mettre en quelque banque ; et que nous luy avons ordonné de ne rien dire à son révérendissime père général de sa naissance, mais seulement qu'il persuade et qu'il feigne à vostre révérence qu'il est fils d'un riche prédicant, lequel estant mort depuis quelque temps, sa mère meü de quelque envie de se faire catholique et de luy donner le bien qui luy appartient, luy a escry, et qu'ainsy vostre révérendissime paternité, désireuse du salut de cette personne et de la faire catholique, voyant aussy qu'il peut avoir son bien, luy permettra facilement d'aller. Voilà ce que nous avons ordonné, parce qu'ainsy elle croira sçavoir seule le secret et n'aura point de sujet de rompre avec vostre révérendissime paternité l'amitié qu'elle pouroit luy porter. Ainsy nous remédions au soubçon qu'elle pouroit avoir que nous le fissions venir à nous et que nous fûssions catholiques. Mais surtout il fault que nostre très-cher fils ne l'attende point, mais qu'il parte au plus tost ; car, comme elle a besoin d'argent (et tellement besoin qu'elle demandoit dernièrement à la diette de Suède 35,000 écus d'avance) elle l'embarasseroit au point que la tragédie (*la pièce*) que nous voulons jouer, ne se

représenteroit que très-mal. Voilà ce que nous avons ordonné touchant la reyne de Suède.

Vostre révérendissime paternité ne s'estonnera donc pas que, si la crainte nous est donnée pour redouter les maux dont nous sommes assiégés, elle sait par raison d'autant plus vive en nous que les maux sont plus grands et traînent des conséquences plus dangereuses. Or, c'est une vérité qui ne reçoit point de contestation entre les meilleurs esprits que, de tous les maux temporels qui nous peuvent arriver, la preuve que nous soyons catholiques est le plus grand, puisque infailliblement elle nous causeroit la mort, et ensemble plusieurs troubles en nos royaumes. Il ne fault donc pas que vostre révérendissime paternité s'estonne si nous pressons tant de précautions, et si nous avons jugé à propos de lui escrire encore cette seconde, tant pour le fait de la reyne de Suède que pour suppléer aux oubliances que nous avons peu commettre en la première, et en ensamble pour en retrancher quelques points qui sont : que nostre très-cher et honoré fils ne se présente point à nostre très-cher cousin le roi de France, ni à nostre très-honorée sœur madame la duchesse d'Orléans auparavant que de nous avoir parlé ; mais seulement qu'il vienne à nous soit par la France, par Paris ou autres chemins qu'il plaira à vostre révérendissime paternité luy déterminer. Il s'abstiendra durant le voyage d'escrire à la reyne de Suède, crainte qu'elle vist que l'on n'observe point ce que nous avons dit cy-dessus par dissimulation. Voilà ce que nous avons déterminé ensemble avec les reynes, crainte d'eclat ou de quelque accident.

De plus nous prions vostre révérendissime paternité (bien que Sa Majesté très-chrétienne, la reyne, et nostre très-chère sœur madame la duchesse d'Orléans sçachent secrettement la bonne volonté que nous avons dèz longtemps de nous faire catholique), nous le prions néanmoins de s'abstenir de leur escrire en aucune façon touchant ces matières, mais de tenir toujours le tout très-secrèt jusques à ce que la Providence de Dieu ayt auttremment disposé les affaires.

Or, comme nous désirons avec toute la prudence requise en

une affaire de si grande conséquence pour nous et la paix de nos royaumes, faciliter à nostre très-cher et bien aymé fils toutes les voyes nécessaires pour la négociation de nostre salut, et affin d'éviter les inconvénients qui se pourroist trouver de ce costé, nous avons pris conseil avec les reynes, sçavoir, que lorsqu'il sera arrivé seul et à l'inconnu à Londres, car ainsi est nostre bon plaisir et volonté, il prenne son temps pour se couvrir et vestir le plus lestement qu'il lui sera possible, s'il ne l'est pas assez, pour ne l'avoir voulu faire crainte de se salir par les mauvais temps et chemins fangeux qui peuvent gaster un coche et ensemble tous ceux qui sont dedans. Estant en ordre et posture convenable, qu'il prenne l'occasion de s'adresser à la reyne régente (*regnante*), ou lorsqu'elle sera à la messe en notre palais de Saint-James ou lorsque Sa Majesté a le mot de nostre part de faire tout ce qu'il fault pour l'introduire devant nous avec toute la prudence possible, dont nous sommes assurés qu'il n'arrivera aucun désordre ny soubçon. Il n'a auttre chose à faire sinon à se laisser conduire selon qu'il sera averty, et luy mandons d'observer ponctuellement tout ce que nous luy avons escry, particulièrement ce que nous avons mis dans l'enveloppe.

Cependant nous renouvelons à votre révérendissime paternité la prière que nous lui avons faite dans la première, qui est de ne nous escrire point ny de nous faire aucune réponse que par les mains de nostre très-cher et bien aymé fils à qui nous commandons de sortir de Rome au plus tost; ne voulant pas que la reyne de Suède lui parle pour les raisons susdittes. Estant sorty de Rome, il prendra sa commodité pour nous venir trouver; nous prions votre révérendissime paternité, si cela estoit nécessaire, de le mouvoir à venir au plus tost, luy représentant le besoin que nous en avons. Car nous sçavons qu'il n'a pas peu de répugnance à l'Angleterre, ce que nous attribuons pour n'y avoir pas esté élevé, et pour se voir contraint d'y vivre inconnu, n'ayant jamais peu le faire y demeurer qu'une année. Encore, devant qu'elle fût finie, il nous représenta tant de raisons que nous fusmes contraints de la laisser aller en Hollande, où il s'est comporté avec grande louange et

grande satisfaction de nostre part, pour les belles-lettres et études où il s'est parfaitement avancé.

Nous croyons qu'il a trop de jugement pour manquer à nous obéyr et à nous venir trouver, ce que nous désirons de luy. Aussitôt qu'il sera venu, nous ferons en sorte, par le moyen des reynes, de le faire faire secrettement prestre ; et s'il y a quelque chose que l'evesque ordinaire ne puisse pas faire sans permission de Sa Saincteté, qu'il ne manque pas d'y pourvoir très-secrettement, en telle sorte que l'on ne vienne point à sçavoir qui il est ; ce qu'il fera, s'il peut, auparavant que de partir de Rome. Cependant nous prions votre révérendissime paternité de prier Dieu pour les reynes, nos royaumes et nous qui sommes

CHARLES, roy d'Angleterre.

A Wthall, ce 29 d'aoust 1668.

Charles II. to James de la Cloche, Aug. 4th, 1668.

(Of doubtful authenticity.)

Pour nostre très honoré fils le prince Stuart, demeurant entre les Révérends Pères Jésuites, soubz le nom du sieur de La Cloche. A Rome.

Monsieur, nous avons escry amplement à M. vostre révérendissime Père général ; il vous dira nostre volonté. La reyne de Suède nous a demandé, en prest, la somme d'argent que nous avons eu le soin de luy faire tenir pour vostre entretien, qui estoit bastante pour plusieurs années. Nous avons ordonné ce qu'il fault là-dessus ; c'est pourquoi ne vous en mettez point en peine, et ne lui en écrivez ni parlez plus.

Si la saison de l'automne est trop mauvaise pour partir à nous venir trouver, et que vous ne le puissiez sans vous mettre en danger évident de tomber malade, attendez au commencement du printemps prochain, ayant surtout soin de la conservation de vostre santé, et vous tenant en repos sans nous escrire, car nous ne sommes pas peu soubçonnés d'estre catholique.

Il ennuye (*tarde*) extrêmement aux reynes de vous voir à qui nous avons communiqué en secret vostre conversion à la

religion romaine. Elles nous ont conseillé de vous mander que nous ne vous empescherons pas de vivre dans l'Institut que vous avez embrassé, et nous sommes ravis que vous en soyez toute votre vie ; mais que vous consultiez bien vos forces et votre complexion qui nous a paru assez foible et delicate. On peut estre bon catholique sans estre religieux ; et vous devez considérer que nous avions dessein de vous reconnoistre publiquement avant peu d'années pour nostre fils : mais le parlement ny les affaires ne l'ayant pas permis jusqu'à présent, nous avons toujours esté contraint de différer. Vous devez en outtre considérer que vous pouviez prétendre semblables tittres de nostre part que le duc de Monmouth, et peut-être plus amples ; en outtre que nous sommes sans enfans de la reyne, que ceux du duc d'Yorck sont fort foibles ; que par toutes raisons et à cause de la qualité de vostre mère, vous pouviez prétendre de nous et du parlement d'estre préféré au duc de Monmouth. En ce cas, estant jeune comme vous estes, si la liberté de conscience et si la religion catholique rentrent en ce royaume, vous pourriez avoir quelque espérance pour la couronne : car nous pouvons vous assurer que si Dieu permet que nous et nostre très-honoré frère le duc d'Yorck mourions sans enfans, les royaumes vous appartiennent, et le parlement ne peut pas légitimement s'y opposer, si ce n'est qu'en matière d'estre catholique vous en fussiez exclus, si la liberté de conscience n'estoit pas encore établie, et que, comme à présent, on ne peut (*pût*) élire auttres rois que protestants. Voilà ce que nous sommes conseillés par les reynes de vous mander. Si cependant, tout considéré, vous aymez mieux servir à Dieu dans l'Institut de messieurs les jésuites, nous ne voulons pas résister aux volontés de Dieu que nous n'avons desja que trop irrité par nos offenses. Nous ne vous empeschons pas donc de poursuivre cet estat si Dieu vous l'inspire ; mais nous désirons seulement que vous y pensiez bien.

Nous n'avions point voulu escrire au pape jusques à ce que nous vous ayons parlé de vive voix. Nous avons escry au (pape) deffunt, affin qu'il fist cardinal nostre très-cher et bien

ayme cousin, le milord d'Aubigny, dont nous n'eusmes pas la satisfaction que nous demandions. Cependant nous ne nous rebutons point pour tout cela ; Sa Sainteté nous ayons représenté quantité de raisons pour les quelles il ne pouvait pas en conscience créer un cardinal en nos royaumes, les affaires de la religion et autres estant commes elles sont.

Nous avons depuis peu escry à la reyne de Suède, et luy avons recommandé de ne vous escrire point et de vous traiter comme un simple cavalier, sans qu'elle monstre avoir connoissance de vostre naissance ; c'est pourquoi vous ne trouverez pas mauvais si Sa Majesté vous traite de même. Ce nous est un douleur non petite de vous voir toujours contraint de vivre à l'inconnu ; mais ayez patience encore un peu, car, avant peu d'années, nous tâcherons tellement d'accomoder les affaires et le parlement, que tout le monde sçaura qui vous estes. Vous ne vivrez plus dans ces gesnes et contraintes, et ne tiendra qu'à vous de vivre dans la liberté et les délices d'une personne de votre naissance ; si ce n'est que Dieu vous inspire fortement, et que vous vouliez absolument continuer la vie religieuse que vous avez encommencée.

Bien que nous ne puissions ny ne devons pas apertement (*ouvertement*) montrer la bonne volonté que nous avons pour messieurs les jésuittes qui vous ont receu, touttefois, en attendant que nous puissions plus ouvertement les favoriser de nostre royale magnificence, s'il y a quelque lieu ou place ou autre occasion où ils ayent besoin de notre ayde et où nous le ferons d'autant plus que nous sçavons que le tout sera employé au service de Dieu et rémission de nos offenses, et que, aussy, nous ne voulons pas qu'une personne de vostre naissance reste parmy eux sans quelque chose fonder en mémoire d'une personne de votre extraction. Nous parlerons à Londres de cette matière, si vous persistez dans vostre dessein de vivre parmy eux.

Cependant, croyez que nous vous avons toujours eu en affection particulière, non seulement à cause que vous nous estes né dans notre plus tendre jeunesse, lorsque nous n'avions guère plus de seize à dix-sept ans, que particulièrement à cause

de l'excellent naturel que nous avons toujours remarqué en vous, de la science éminente où vous vous estes avancé par nostre moyen, que vous vous estes toujours porté en honneste homme, et que vous avez particulièrement obéy à nos ordres ; ce qui, joint à l'amour paternel que nous vous portons, fait un grand empire sur nostre volonté à vous vouloir toutte sorte de bien, outre la compassion que nous avons de vous voir ainsy inconnu et méprisé, ce qui durera le moins que nous pourrons.

Nous ne pouvons pas bien secrettement vous faire venir à Rome somme d'argent nécessaire pour une personne de votre naissance, et pour vous mettre en ordre et estat de paroître devant nous ; ne voulant ni ne pouvant pas faire éclatter que nous avons personne à Rome avec qui nous ayons communication. Il n'est pas possible que vous ne soyez toujours assez réservé pour nous venir treuver si ce n'est en estat de personne de vostre qualité, pour le moins en simple cavalier, lorsqu'il faudra mettre pied en Angleterre. Finissant, priez Dieu pour nous, pour les reynes et nos royaumes.

Je suis vostre affectionné père,

CHARLES,

Roy d'Ang., de Fr., d'Ec. et d'Hib.

A Wthall, ce 4 aoust 1668.

Charles II. to the General of the Jesuits, about Sept. 7th, 1668.

Monsieur et révérendissime père, nous n'avons jamais senty tant d'embarras, quoyque nous en ayons bien eu dans nostre vie, qu'à présent que nous voulons penser sérieusement à nostre salut. Nous n'avons pas plus tost cachetté cette auttre lettre, que nous vous prions de lire auparavant celle-cy qui est ouverte, affin d'entendre mieux nos intentions et l'ordre dans lequel nous tenons à les escrire. Les reynes nous ont averty et donné conseil de ne nous point presser de l'envoyer, parce qu'elles veulent encore y joindre et apporter certaines précautions notables et tout à fait nécessaires pour rendre la venüe de nostre très-cher et bien-aimé fils en Angleterre, et plus secrette et plus prudente.

Pour cet effet, Leurs Majestés ayant trouvé le moyen de sçavoir accortement et avec prudence les façons de faire de vostre Société en ce qui concerne ceux qui y sont nouvellement entrés, elles nous ont représenté avoir appris de bonne part que les initiants ou novices de vostre sainte société, non plus que les autres, ne sont jamais mandés seuls sans que quelque autre religieux les accompagne, tant pour sçavoir leurs actions et comportements que pour en rendre raison au supérieur, ce que nous admirons comme une prudence très-sainte et qui ne peut venir que de ce divin esprit dont une si sainte société est animée. Mais, nonobstant, en ce rencontre, nous prions vostre révérendissime paternité de dispenser nostre très-cher fils de ce costé-là, parceque nous luy commandons absolument, en vertu du pouvoir que Dieu nous à donné sur luy, de venir seul nous trouver, tant à raison que cela s'accorde bien avec la lettre que nous avons fait tenir à la reyne de Suède qui doit croire qu'il est allé seul, c'est-à-dire, sans compagnie d'aucun autre religieux, que principalement à raison des inconvénients dangereux dont nous serions continuellement en crainte s'il venait accompagné de quelque religieux. Nous avons déjà dissimulé (*fait accroire*) très-secrettement à quelques personnes très-sûres, dans une grande partie des ports d'Angleterre et par voyes tout à fait cachées, qu'un prince estranger, de telle taille, de telle mine, seul, se réfugie à nous, et le reste que nous ne pouvons pas expliquer à vostre révérendissime paternité pour tirer trop en longueur. Nous faisons tout cela, en partie affin que, si nous venions à estre en quelque façon soubçonnés pour estre avec luy trop familier, nous ayons de quoy dire pour lever le soubçon.

De là vostre révérendissime paternité peut voir que s'il se rencontroit quelque Italien avec luy qui fût reconnu pour Italien, soit pour l'accent de la langue italienne ou autrement, cela seroit capable de renverser tous nos desseins et la machine que nous voulons jouer pour venir très-seurement à bout de nos justes désirs. Outtre que, quand mesme il pourroit avoir un autre qu'un Italien avec luy, nous luy deffendons

d'en faire passer aucun en Angleterre, de quelque nation qu'il soit, pour plusieurs raisons très-considérables qu'il serait trop long d'exposer.

Il ne fault pas que vostre révérendissime paternité s'estonne si nous sommes si avisés, puisque nous avons appris au temps de Cromwel ce que c'est que misère et les choses de ce monde, ce que c'est que d'être prudent et de se cacher pour venir à bout d'une entreprise. Nous ne doutons point que, comme nostre très-cher et bien-aimé fils est jeune, il n'ayme la compagnie et l'entretien, et qu'il ne désirast d'avoir des rapports avec quelqu'un, par lettres ou par conversation, car nous sçavons qu'il n'ayme pas trop la cour. Mais il fault qu'il ayt patience, d'autant qu'il n'est pas raisonnable que, pour un plaisir de si peu de conséquence et de durée, il se mette en danger de ruiner tous nos desseins. Outre qu'il doit sçavoir que dès-là qu'il aura mis le pied en nostre palais, il n'aura conversation avec personne qu'avec nous et les reynes qui donnerons les ordres nécessaires pour ce sujet ; ny escrira à personne, sinon à vostre révérendissime paternité, aucunes lettres ; et les lettres qu'il écrira à vostre révérendissime paternité, nous les manderons par un exprès en grandissime secret à Rome affin que vostre révérendissime paternité nous soulage dans les besoins qui nous pourront arriver touchant nostre âme.

Nous nous sommes interrogés (*informés*) des ports de mer plus proches de Rome. Entre plusieurs que l'on nous a nommé, nous nous sommes ressouvenus de Civita-Vecchia et de Gênes. Nous luy commandons donc d'aller à Gênes. Nous avons appris, avec la prudence qu'il fault, que vostre révérendissime paternité à la maison de sa société. Estant donc à Gênes, nous voulons qu'il cherche quelque vaisseau ou chaloupe anglèse, mais en telle manière que nous ne voulons pas que messieurs vos religieux le recommandent au maistre ni à ceux du navire pour en avoir soin, n'y ne monstrent le connoistre pour raisons très-considérables, et parce que telles gens de navire redisent tout au port où ils arrivent. En outre, nous voulons qu'il mette et laisse son vestement religieux en

la maison de messieurs ses amis et frères les jésuites à Gênes. Il le revestira au même lieu pour s'en retourner à Rome, quand nous le renverrons pour y poursuivre sa vie religieuse encommencée.

Il abordera donc en nostre royaume seul et à l'inconnu, et au premier port de nostre royaume qu'il abordera, il se nommera, comme partout où il passera, Henry de Rohan, qui est le nom de la famille d'un certain prince français, calviniste, à nous très-connüe et intime. Nous sommes en telle crainte qu'il n'arrive aucun accident que nous prenons maintenant, dans les divers ports, connoissance, bien que très-secrete et avec la prudence requise, des vaisseaux qui sont partis et qui doivent arriver, et mesme, autant qu'il est en nous, des personnes, soubz prétexte de zèle et bien de nostre royaume, et soubz prétexte du maintien de la religion protestante, à laquelle nous faisons semblant d'estre attachés plus que jamais, quoyque devant Dieu qui connaît les cœurs, nous l'abhorrons comme très-fausse et pernicieuse.

De plus, nous deffendons à nostre très-cher et honoré fils de passer par la France et aultres endroits ou ports qui sont vers ces parties-là, pour ne pouvoir pas bien secrettement faire jouer nos reports de ce costé; et ainsy nous n'avons point treuvé de lieu plus propre que Gênes pour qu'il s'y embarque. Et cependant, en attendant qu'il soit de retour à Rome, vostre révérendissime paternité fera courir le bruit qu'il est allé à Jersé ou Hanton voir sa mère prétendue qui se veult faire catholique, comme nous avons mis et dissimulé dans cette auttre lettre, et que, pour arriver plus tost, il est allé par mer.

Voilà donc ce que nous luy commandons d'observer de point en point par l'autorité que Dieu nous a donné sur luy, et nous luy promettons, foy de roy, que nous ne cherchons auttre chose en sa venüe que le salut de nostre âme, son bien et celuy de l'Institut qu'il a embrassé, que test ou tard nous trouverons moyen de favoriser notablement de nostre royale magnificence. Et bien loin de l'empêcher de poursuivre sa vocation tant à la religion catholique qu'à vostre compagnie, nous et les reynes luy prescherons plus qu'aucun directeur

qu'il puisse avoir. Il est bien vrai que, lorsque le temps et les affaires permettront que nous escrivions et fassions connestre à Sa Sainteté l'obéissance que nous luy portons comme au vicaire de Christ, nous espérons qu'elle aura trop de bonne volonté envers nous pour luy refuser le chapeau de cardinal ; d'autant que les conditions qui le pouroist empêcher d'avoir cette dignité pour l'honneur de nos personnes et de nos royaumes, ne se rencontrent pas en luy, sçavoir, de demeurer en Angleterre, puisque nous pourrons l'envoyer demeurer à Rome, comme nous prétendons, avec la magnificence royale requise à sa naissance. Toutefois, si, avec le temps, il ayme mieux vivre dans la vie religieuse encommencée, nous laisserons facilement ce qui pourroit estre l'honneur de nostre couronne et de nos personnes plus tost que de luy pourchasser telles dignités contre sa volonté.

Nous nous sommes interrogés discrettement de nostre médecin si le mal de mer peut causer quelques accidents funestes à ceux qui sont de foible complexion, lequel nous a assurés que le mal de mer n'en a jamais fait mourir aucun ; bien au contraire, estant un moyen pour estre plus sain. Toutefois s'il a trop de peine de venir tout d'un trait, il taschera de faire en sorte que la barque ou chaloupe où il se mettra, se repose de temps en temps à quelque port. Il pourroit bien venir tout d'un trait à Londres, mais nous ne voulons pas pour raisons. Qu'il aborde en d'autres ports d'Angleterre d'où il viendra par terre en un coche jusques à Londres.

Nous renouvelons à vostre révérendissime paternité la prière de ne nous point escrire n'y faire response, si ce n'est par les mains de nostre très-cher et honoré fils, quand il viendra nous treuver. Et s'ila besoin de quelque chose qu'il n'ayt pas pour faire son voyage jusqu'à Londres, nous prions vostre révérendissime paternité d'en avoir soin particulier, luy fournissant ce dont il aura besoin, dont nous tiendrons compte.

Nous croyons fermement que c'est Dieu qui nous a inspiré toutes les voyes susdittes pour nous faire venir secrettement

nostre tres-honoré fils, pour ce qu'il a dit en sa parolle, que quand deux ou trois seront assemblés en son nom, il sera au milieu d'eux. Nous voicy justement, la reyne notre très-chère mère et la reyne régente (*regnante*) que jugeons le tout ainsy, non sans avoir invoqué auparavant l'ayde du Saint-Esprit. Outre que les reynes ont commandé de dire quantité de messes à leur prestres, selon leur intention qui n'est autre sinon que cette affaire réussisse aussi bien que tous nos projets ladessus qui ne tendent qu'à nostre bien, celui de l'Eglise catholique romaine, et de nos royaumes.

Nous sommes

CHARLES, roy d'Angleterre.

The General of the Jesuits to Charles II., October 14th, 1668.

Sacra Maestà,—Dal latore di questa, che è gentiluomo francese, intenderà Vostra Maestà la fedele esecuzione da me data alle tre sue lettere, e la mia inesplicabile osservanza alla sua reale persona. Con la stessa prontezza e fede eseguirò quanto Vostra Maestà si degnerà d'impormi; e procurerò di essere qual Ella mi presuppone, e qual mi obbliga ad esserle. E profondissimamente à V. M. m'inchino.

Livorno, 14 ottobre, 1668.

Charles II. to the General of the Jesuits, November 18th, 1668.

Recommandé en main de Monsieur de la Cloche, Jésuite à Rome.

Monsieur et révérendissime père, vous nous estes trop nécessaire, dans la condition où vostre mérite vous a élevé, pour ne vous estre pas importun dans celle où le malheur de nostre naissance veult que nous nous treuvions.

Nostre très cher et honoré fils vous dira de nostre part tout nostre procédé, et comme nous estions en peine sur qui jetter la veüe pour envoyer de rechef quelqu'un à vostre révérendissime paternité touchant nos affaires. Il nous a

représenté avec instance le désir qu'il avoit de retourner luy mesme à Rome en ambassade secrette de nostre part vers vostre révérendissime paternité; ce que nous luy avons accordé sous condition qu'il s'en retourne à Londres aussy tost qu'il aura eu audience de vostre révérendissime paternité, et obtenu les choses dont nous la prions, et que nostre dit très cher et honoré fils luy expliquera de nostre part de vive voix, nous amenant, en repassant par la France, le réverend père qu'il y a laissé.

A la requeste de nostre dit très cher et honoré fils qui nous a représenté que le lieu où il a esté receu parmy vous est incommodé de dettes, et qu'il y a nécessité de quelques bastiments et autres choses, nous avons fait en sorte que vostre maison où il a été receu puisse recevoir de nous au plus tost pour l'expiation de nos offenses une somme notable, attendant, s'il vous plaist, que nous vous donnions avis des moyens que vostre révérendissime paternité prendra avec nous pour la recevoir, qui sera devant un an. Si votre révérendissime paternité nous escrit, ce sera par nostre très cher et honoré fils qui dira a vostre révérendissime paternité toutes nos intentions que nous ne mettons pas sur ce papier. Nous sommes

CHARLES, roy d'Angleterre.

A Wthall, Londres, ce 18 Novembre, 1668.

S'il arrivoit que nostre très cher et honoré fils eust besoin de quelque chose quelle qu'elle puisse estre, nous prions vostre révérendissime paternité d'en avoir soin et nous luy tiendrons compte de tout.

BOOK III.

DOCUMENTS CONCERNING THE ABBÉ PREGNANI.

Charles II. to Madame, December 14th, 1668.

He that came last, and delivered me your letter of the 9th, has given me a full account of what he was charged with and I am very well pleased with what he tells me. I will answer the other letter he brought to me very quickly. I am sure it shall not be my faute if all be not as you can wish. I will send you a cypher by the first safe occasion, and you shall then know the way I thinke most proper to proceede in the whole matter, which I hope will not displease you. I will say no more by the post upon this businesse, for you know 'tis not very sure.

I do intende to prorogue the Parliament till October next, before which time I shall have sett my affaires in that posture as there will not be so many miscarriages to be hunted after as in the last sessions. I beg your pardon for forgetting, in my last, to thanke you for the petticote you sent me, 'tis the finest I ever saw, and thanke you a thousand times for it. I can say no more to you now, for I am called to goe to the Play, and so I am intierly yours.

C. R.

Charles II. to Madame, December 27th, 1668.

You must yett expect a day or two for an answer to what Leighton brought, because I send it by a safe way, and you know how much secrecy is necessary for the carrying on of

the businesse, and I assure you that nobody does, nor shall know anything of it heere, but my selfe and that one person more, till it be fitt to be publique, which will not be till all matters are agreed upon.

C. R.

Charles II. to Madame, January 20th, 1669.

You will see, by the letter which I have written to the king, my brother, the desire I have to enter into a personall frindship with him, and to unite our interests so, for the future, as there may never be any jealousys betweene us. The only thing which can give any impediment to what we both desire is the matter of the sea, which is so essencially a point to us heere, as an union upon any other security can never be lasting, nor can I be answerable to my kingdomes, if I should enter into an alliance, wherein there present and future security were not fully provided for. I am now thinkeing of the way how to proceede in this whole matter, which must be carried on with all secrecy imaginable, till the particulars are further agreed upon. I must confesse, I was not very glad to heare you were with childe, because I had a thought, by your making a journey hither, all things might have been adjusted, without any suspicion, and as I shall be very just to the king, my brother, in never mentioning what has passed betweene us, in case this negociation does not succede as I desire, so I expect the same justice and generosity from him, that no advances which I make out of the desire I have to obtaine a true friendship between us, may ever turne to my prejudice. I send you, heere inclosed, my letter to the king, my brother, desiring that this matter might passe through your handes, as the person in the world I have most confidence in, and I am very glad to finde that Mon^r de Turene is so much your frinde, who I esteeme very much, and assure my selfe will be very usefull in this negociation. I had written thus farr, when I receaved yours by the Italian, whose name and capacity you do not know, and he delivred your letter to me, in a passage, where it was so darke, as I do not know his face againe if

I see him ; so as the man is likely to succcede, when his recommendation and reception are so sutable to one another ! But to returne to the businesse of the letter, I assure you that there is no league entered into as yett with the Empereur. The only league I am in, is the garanty I am engaged in with the Hollanders upon the peace at Aix, which is equally bindeing towards both the crownes. I thinke Mr de Lorraine deserves to be punished for his unquiett humour, but I wish the king, my brother, do not proceede too far in that matter, least he gives a jealousy to his neighbours, that he intends a farther progresse than what he declared at first, which might be very prejudiciall to what you and I wish and endeavour to compasse. And you shall not want, upon all occasions, full informations necessary, but we must have a great care what we write by the post, least it fall into hands which may hinder our design, for I must againe conjure you, that the whole matter be an absolut secrett, other wise we shall never compasse the end we aime at. I have not yett absolutly contrived how to proceede in this businesse, because there must be all possible precautions used, that it may not éclater, before all things be agreed upon, and pray do you thinke of all the wayes you can to the same end, and communicate them to me. I send you heere a cypher, which is very easy and secure, the first side is the single cypher, and within such names I could thinke of necessary to our purpose. I have no more to add, but that I am entierly yours. C. R.

Lionne to Colbert, Feb. $\frac{13}{23}$, 1669.

Le roi a très-souvent considéré que, comme vous avez à faire prendre une grande résolution à un prince naturellement fort irrésolu, dont la principale confiance se trouve aujourd'hui déposée entre deux personnes, dont l'une a des inclinations et des attachements directement opposés à cette résolution, et l'autre, qui peut avoir de bonnes intentions et quelque intérêt même à faire réussir la chose, est extraordinairement inappliquée, Sa Majesté, dis-je, a plusieurs fois considéré qu'un des

moyens qui pouvaient vous être plus utiles pour le bon succès de votre négociation serait d'avoir à votre entière disposition, auprès dudit roi, quelque personne affidée et d'esprit capable, entrant à toute heure dans ses divertissements et ses plus secrètes occupations, où votre caractère ne vous laisse pas admettre ; et que vous pussiez vous servir de cet homme pour faire insinuer les choses que vous n'auriez pas occasion de dire, ou qui même seraient mieux et persuaderaient davantage étant dites par un tiers ; être ponctuellement averti de tout ce qui se passe, et enfin employer cette d'émissaire comme la main et l'instrument qu'elle met à l'usage qu'elle veut, et si elle ne veut, à rien. Sur ce fondement le roi a embrassé avec plaisir l'occasion qui se présente de vous fournir d'ici même, sans donner de delà aucun soupçon, un instrument de la nature que je viens de dire, par un incident que est heureusement arrivé, que je vais vous expliquer en peu de mots : Vous savez sans doute qui était le père Pregnani, théatin, que le roi a tiré du cloître pour en faire un abbé, à la recommandation de madame l'électrice de Bavière, et vous n'ignorez pas non plus que la connaissance qu'il a de l'astrologie judiciaire, aussi parfaite qu'on la peut avoir dans une science d'ailleurs fort incertaine, lui donna d'abord un grand nom dans Paris, et particulièrement auprès des dames, qui ont toujours des curiosités de pénétrer dans l'avenir pour ce qui regarde leur fortune ; la même chose est arrivée à M. le duc de Montmouth quand il était en France. Il vit souvent ledit abbé dans les deux voyages qu'il a faits ici, et se trouva si enchanté de toutes les choses qu'il lui dit des événements de sa vie passée, et charmé peut-être aussi des espérances qu'il lui donna pour l'avenir, qu'ils contractèrent ensemble une amitié fort étroite, et en se séparant le duc dit à l'abbé qu'en toutes manières il fallait qu'il fit voyage en Angleterre, parce que le roi son père, sur les relations qu'il lui en avait faites, avait très-grande envie de le voir, se plaisant fort à l'astrologie et y donnant beaucoup de créance. Il est encore à remarquer que ledit abbé est très-intelligent en chimie, à quoi on sait ici que ledit roi donne ses principales applications ; que quand il s'enferme souvent et

pour des heures entières avec le duc de Buckingham, c'est pour faire souffler en leur présence.

Depuis quelques jours ledit duc ayant écrit audit abbé pour le sommer pressamment de la parole qu'il lui avait donnée de faire un voyage en Angleterre, et celui-ci en ayant rendu compte au roi, Sa Majesté, qui l'avait même fait inviter par moi à tâcher de se venir cette lettre pour les raisons et sur les fondements que j'ai ci-dessus touchés, temoigna être très-aise de la chose, sous les conditions suivantes qu'elle a prescrites audit abbé, qui sont qu'acquérant les entrées dans les divertissements et occupations du roi d'Angleterre, il appliquera toute son industrie à vous servir dans les choses qui vous lui direz, dont on ne lui a donné ici aucune connaissance imaginable, qu'il ne fera pas une démarche ni ne dira même un seul mot qui puisse regarder les affaires du roi, soit au duc, soit au milord, que ce ne soit par vos ordres et sur les instructions que vous lui aurez donnés ; et enfin, que non seulement il vous rendra compte de tout journellement par les moyens que vous aviserez qui pourront rendre moins suspect votre concert, comme il serait au roi même, mais que de plus Sa Majesté lui défend de rien écrire ici, tant qu'il sera en Angleterre, non pas même à moi, Sa Majesté ne voulant rien savoir que par votre seul canal, comme il est juste ; et que par conséquent, quelque chose qu'on lui pût dire dont on lui demandât le secret à votre égard, il doit vous le dire tout ; et que s'il manquait à cela, et qu'il le fît passer ici sans votre participation, Sa Majesté, quelque avantageuse qui lui pût être la chose, lui enverrait aussitôt ordre de s'en revenir.

Je crois, monsieur, à ces conditions-là, qu'il n'oserait manquer d'exécuter, s'il ne voulait lui-même se ruiner ici, ce qu'il a trop d'intérêt de ne faire, que la résolution que le roi a prise peut vous être fort avantageuse dans votre négociation, et qu'il ne serait pas même impossible que le roi d'Angleterre ne pût être persuadé par des raisons d'astrologie, à laquelle il donne grande foi, qu'il n'a de bonne et sûre liaison à faire qu'avec la France, et que toutes les autres pourraient causer la ruine de ses affaires et de son autorité. Vous trouverez, je

m'assure, que l'abbé a infiniment d'esprit, et une merveilleuse dextérité à parvenir à ses fins, et qu'il peut faire des merveilles, et particulièrement étant bien conduit comme il le sera quand vous le dirigerez. Je lui ai dit qu'il aille descendre chez le duc de Montmouth, pour ne point donner de soupçon de son arrivée, et qu'il vous envoie en même temps par son valet cette lettre, afin qu'elle puisse être déchiffrée quand il vous ira rendre ses devoirs la première fois.

MSS. Affaires Etrangères. Corr. Angl. 96.

Charles II. to Madame, March 7th, 1669.

I am to go, to-morrow morning, to Newmarkett, at three a clocke, and kept this expresse till now, to know what the king, my brother, would do with Douglas his regiment, which I perceave, by yours that I receaved this day. does not go to Candie, which I take as a great marke of the king, my brother's, kindnesse to me, and pray lett him know so much from me, and assure him that it was not anything for Douglas his sake, that I desired so earnestly his stay, but for reasons which he shall know within very few dayes. I have dispatched this night the Earl of St. Albans to Lord Arundell, who is fully instructed as you can wish. You will see by him, the reason why I desired you to write to nobody heere, of the businesse of France, but to my selfe; he has some private businesse of his owne to dispatch before he leaves this towne, but he will certaynely sett out this weeke. But pray take no notice of his haveing any commission from me, for he pretends to go only upon his owne score, to attend the queene. You need not feare anything concerning Hamilton, for there is nobody as like to burne there fingers but those who medle in businesse, & he does not come in that trap. But I see you are misse informed if you thinke I trust my L^d of Ormond lesse than I did. There are other considerations which makes me send my L^d Robarts into Ireland, which are too long for a letter. I am not sorry that Sr Will: Coventry has given me this good occasion, by

sending my L^d of Buckingham a chalenge, to turne him out of the Councill. I do intend to turn him allso out of the Tresury. The truth of it is, he has been a troublesome man in both places, and I am well rid of him. You may be sure that I will keepe the secrett of your profett. I give little credit to such kinde of cattle, & the lesse you do it the better, for if they could tell anything 'tis inconvenient to know one's fortune before hand, whether good or bad, & so, my dearest sister, good-night, for 'tis late, & I have not above three howers to sleepe this night.

C. R.

I had almost forgott to tell you, that I find your frind, l'Abbé Pregnany, a man very ingenious in all things I have talked with him upon, and I find him to have a great deale of witt, but you may be sure I will enter no farther with him than according to your carracter.

Colbert to Lionne, London, March $\frac{8}{18}$ th, 1668.

L'Abbé Pregnani est parti hier au matin pour se rendre à Newmarket après m'avoir dit que le roi, qui y va aujourd'hui, lui a témoigné désirer de le voir. Les moyens dont il s'est servi pour exciter la curiosité de sa majesté britannique sont assez plaisants, selon ce qu'il m'en a confié. Le duc de Montmouth étant amoureux d'une fort belle demoiselle pour laquelle il a cru que le roi et M. le duc d'York avaient aussi beaucoup d'inclination, a eu la curiosité de savoir de l'abbé qui des trois obtiendrait le plus tôt ce qu'il souhaite; celui-ci, sans avoir vu la fille, lui a dit quelles étaient sa physionomie et ses inclinations, ce qu'elle avait fait par le passé et ce qu'elle ferait à l'avenir, et le tout avec des circonstances si particulières que le roi, en ayant été averti par le duc de Montmouth, a voulu que l'abbé fit son horoscope, et pour cet effet qu'il portât ses livres à Newmarket pour y travailler. Voilà, monsieur, quel a été son commencement; si la suite y répond et qu'il veuille bien que vous en soyez averti par moi; j'en aurai de bonnes à vous conter.

A peine était-il sorti que Leighton m'est venu voir et m'a fait lire une lettre dont il m'avait parlé la veille à Whitehall ; cette lettre est en anglais et d'un caractère de femme ; aussi m'a-t-il dit qu'elle avait été écrite par madame la duchesse de Richemond, qui est auprès de la reine mère d'Angleterre, à M. de Buckingham son frère. La diction en est fort confuse et rébondante à l'esprit de la dame. Ce qu'elle contient de plus considérable est que Madame ne se fie point à lui, qu'elle le hait, qu'elle envoie un astrologue pour négocier avec le roi, le dit duc de Montmouth et Hamilton sans lui en donner aucune part ; que le comte de Saint-Albans doit être bientôt ici et se joindre aux autres ; qu'enfin on le joue, et surtout qu'il se garde bien d'aller à Paris, parce que ses ennemis le perdraient pendant son absence. Elle l'informe encore de beaucoup de particularités que j'ometts, parce qu'elles ne regardent point nos affaires. Après que j'eus lu cette lettre, et qu'il m'a expliqué les mots que j'avais peine à comprendre, il m'a dit qu'elle avait mis le duc de Buckingham dans une fort mauvaise humeur, qu'il lui avait dit ' qu'il se repentait d'avoir donné à Madame tant de part aux affaires ; que le roi n'y avait au commencement aucune disposition et était mal satisfait d'elle ; que c'était lui qui avait obligé sa majesté britannique à confier cette négociation à Madame, afin de lui donner du crédit en France ; qu'il avait regret d'avoir interrompu pendant quelque temps la bonne correspondance avec moi ; que c'était Madame qui en était cause, et que lui avait fait écrire qu'il ne devait point avoir de confiance en moi, parce que j'avais écrit au roi qu'il était trop inappliqué, et qu'il ne faillait pas espérer de rien faire de bon avec lui si M. Arlington n'y était point ; que depuis, Madame lui ayant écrit d'agir de concert avec moi il m'était venu voir aussitôt " On envoyait," dit il, " un astrologue pour me prendre pour dupe, et en politique et en amour, et me faire le sujet de la raillerie du duc de Montmouth et d'Hamilton, qui est le neveu du duc d'Ormond, mon plus grand ennemi."

Colbert to Lionne, March 11th, 1669.

L'abbé Pregnani arriva Vendredi dernier icy, et m'envoya le même jour la lettre qu'il vous a pleut m'écrire du 13^e. Il m'est aussy venu voir hyer au soir et m'a parlé dans le même sens qu'elle contient. Je ne puis, Monsieur, assez louer la pensée qu'y vous est venue de vous servir de luy et je ne me doute point qu'elle ne produise tout le bon effet que vous en souhaitez et moy aussy. Je luy ai dit tout ce quy s'est passé icy, depuis que j'y suis quy soit de ma connaissance, et aussytost qu'il se sera bien mis dans les bonnes grâces du Roy, ce que l'on doit se promettre bientost de sa dextérité je luy diray toutes les raisons que je crois estre les plus convaincantes pour porter le Roy d'Angleterre à conclure une bonne Union avec nous, et j'auray joye aussy de recevoir ses conseils sur la conduite que j'auray à tenir.

Bib. Nat. Fonds Français, No. 10, 665.

Charles II. to Madame, March 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ th, 1669.

I have had very good sport heere [Newmarket] since Monday last, both by hunting and horse-races. L'Abbé Pregnany is heere, and wonders very much at the pleasure everybody takes at the races, he was so weary with riding from Audly End hither, to see the foot-match, as he is scarce recovered yett. I have been a fox hunting this day & am very weary, yett the wether is so good, as my brother has perswaded me to see his fox-hounds runn to-morrow, & at night I am to lye at Saxum [Lord Croft's], where I shall stay Sunday, & so come hither againe, and not returne to London, till the latter end of next weeke. This bearer, my L^d. Rochester, has a minde to make a little journey to Paris, & would not kiss your hands without a letter from me; pray use him as one I have a very good opinion of; you will find him not to want witt, and did behave him selfe, in all the duch warr, as well as any body, as a volunteer. I have no more to add, but that I am intierly yours. C. R.

Colbert to Lionne, March 21st, 1669.

Le Roy d'Angleterre estant à présent à Newmarket, où ceux quy ont la plus de part dans les affaires l'ont suivy, vous jugez bien que je n'ay pas de matière à présent qu'y mérite d'estre écrite à sa Majesté. J'espère, qu'au retour de cette partye de plaisir, je trouveray l'abbé Pregnani fort avant dans les bonnes grâces du Roy, et qu'il aura ramené l'esprit du duc de Buckingham, au point qu'il est à souhaiter pour la prompte conclusion d'une bonne alliance.

Charles II. to Madame, March 22nd, 1669.

I came from Newmarket, the day before yesterday, where we had as fine wether as we could wish, which added much both to the horse matches, as well as to hunting. L'abbé Pregnani was there most part of the time, & I believe will give you some account of it, but not that he lost his money upon confidence that the Starrs could tell which horse would winn, for he had the ill luck to foretell three times wrong together, & James beleevd him so much, as he lost his mony upon the same score. I had not my cypher at Newmarket, when I receaved yours of the 16th, so as I could say nothing to you in answer to it till now, & before this comes to your hands, you will cleerly see upon what score 363 (the Duke of York) is come into the businesse, and for what reason I desired you not to write to anybody upon the businesse of 271 (France), 341 (Buckingham) knows nothing of 360's (Charles II.) intentions towards 290,315 (the Catholic religion), nor of the person 334 (Charles II.) sends to 100 (the King of France), and you need not feare that he will take it ill that 103 (Lord Arundell) does not write to him, for I have tould him that I have forbid 129 (Arundell) to do it, for feare of intercepting of letters, nor indeed is there much use of our writing much upon this subject, because letters may miscarry, and you are, before this time, so fully acquainted with all, as there is nothing more to be added, till my messenger comes back. You have councilled Monsieur very well in the matter

of Mr de Rohan. I never heard of a more impertinent carriage then his. I had not time to write to you by father Paterique, for he tooke the resolution of going to France but the night before I left this place, but now I desire you to be kinde to the poore man, for he is as honest a man as lives, & pray direct your phisician to have a care of him, for I should really be troubled if he should not do well. What you sent by Mercer is lost, for there are letters come, that informes of his setting saile from havre, in an open challoupe, with intention to come to portsmouth, and we have never heard of him since, so he is undoutedly drownd. I heare Mam sent me a present by him, which, I beleeeve, brought him the ill lucke, so as she ought, in conscience, to be at the charges of praying for his soule, for 'tis her fortune has made the man miscarry! & so, my dearest sister, I am yours, with all the kindnesse and tendernesse imaginable.

C. R.

Colbert to Lionne, April 1st, 1669.

L'abbé Pregnani m'a dit qu'il s'estoit bien mis dans les bonnes grâces du duc de Buckingham, mais il ne m'a pas paru satisfait de l'esprit du Roy, qu'il dit préférer la bagatelle aux choses le plus importantes. Il espère néanmoins luy faire prendre une bonne résolution, par l'apprehension qu'i luy donnera dans son horoscope de disgrâces prochaines.

Cependant le Roy me dit en arrivant, que l'abbé s'estoit fort trompé dans les prédictions qu'il a fait sure chaque course de cheval, que pas une ne s'estoit trouvé véritable, et que les domestiques du duc de Montmouth avoient à cause de cela de grands dommages à prétendre contre luy, ayan tous parié tout ce qu'ils avoient sur les assurances qu'il leur a donné d'un gain indubitable. Il en fait depuis encore d'autres railleries quy ne laissent pas lieu d'espérer qu'il ayt beaucoup d'esgard à ses prognostics. Mais comme le Roy est fort curieux, peut estre sera-t-il bien aise d'apprendre en particulier ce qu'il affecte de mespriser en public. . . .

Bib. Nat. Fonds Français, 10665.

Charles II. to Madame, April 25th, 1669.

I find by 405 (Arlington) that he [? Buckingham] does beleieve there is some businesse with 271 (France), which he knowes nothing of ; he tould 341 (Buckingham) that I had forbidden you to write to him, by which he beleieved there was some mistery in the matter, but Buckingham was not at all alarumed at it, because it was by his owne desire that I writt that to you, but how 371 (Arlington) comes to know that, I cannot tell : I will be good that you write some times to 393 (Leighton) in generall termes, that he may not suspect that there is farther negociations then what he knowes of, because by the messenger he may suspect that there is something of 290,315 (the Catholic religion's) interest in the case, which is a matter he must not be acquainted with. Therefore you must have a great care, not to say the least thing that may make him suspect anything of it. I had writt thus farr before I had heard of your fall, which puts me in great paine for you, and shall not be out of it, till I know that you have received no prejudice by it. I go to-morrow to Newmarket for 6 dayes, and shall be, in the meanetime, very impatient to heare from you, for I can be at no rest when you are not well, & so, my dearest sister, have a care of your selfe, as you have any kinnesse for me.

C. R.

Charles II. to Madame, May 6th, 1669.

You cannot imagine what a noise Lord St. Albans' coming has made heere, as if he had great propositions from 152 (the King of France), which I beate down as much as I can. It being preiudiciall, at this time, to have it thought that 360 (Charles II.) had any other commerce with 126 (Louis XIV.) but that of 280 (the Treaty of Commerce), and in order to that, I have directed some of the councill to meat with 112 (Colbert), which in time will bring on the whole matter, as we can wish, & pray lett there be great caution used on the side of 271 (France) concerning 386 (Charles II.'s)

intentions towards 126 (Louis XIV.) which would not only be preiudiciall to the carrying on of the matters with 270 (Holland), but also to our farther designes abroad, & this opinion I am sure you must be of, if you consider well the whole matter. I beleeeve Mr Montagu has before this, in some degree satisfied you concerning my L^d Arlington, & done him that justice to assure you that nobody is more your servant than he, for he cannot be so intierly myne as he is & be wanting to you in the least degree, & I will be answerable for him in what he owes you. I finde the poore Abbé Pregnany very much troubled, for feare that the railleries about fore-telling the horse matches may have done him some prejudice with you, which I hope it has not done, for he was only trying new trickes, which he had read of in bookes, & gave as little credit to them as we did. Pray continue to be his frind so much as to hinder all you can any prejudice that may come to him upon that score, for the man has witt enough, & is as much your servant as possible, which makes me love him. My wife has been a little indisposed some few dayes, & there is hopes that it will prove a disease not displeasing to me. I should not have been so forward in saying thus much without more certainty, but that I beleeeve others will write it to Paris, & say more than there is, & so I shall end with assuring you that 'tis impossible to be more yours than I am.

C. R.

Colbert to Lionne, April 4th, 1669.

L'abbé Pregnani espère donner plus d'empressement à sa Majesté Britannique par la voye du Duc de Montmouth, et je crois qu'il est bon de tenter aussy ce moyen pour ne rien obmettre.

Colbert to Lionne, May 13th, 1669.

Si l'abbé Pregnani ne réussit point icy ce n'est pas manque d'esprit d'adresse et de zèle pour le service du Roy, mais

c'est qu'il n'y a personne icy quy agisse dans la veine du bien public.

The letter goes on to say it will be better to leave it to himself to decide whether he is of use and ought to stay on, or should avail himself of the permission the King gives him to withdraw.

Charles II. to Madame, June 6th, 1669.

The opportunity of this bearers going into France gives me a good occasion to answer your letters by my L^d Arlington & in the first place to tell you that I am secureing all the principall portes of this countrey, not only by fortifying them as they ought to be, but likewise the keeping them in such handes as I am sure will be faithfull to me upon all occasions, & this will secure the fleete, because the chiefe places where the ships lye are chattam & portsmouth. The first of which is fortifying with all speede, and will be finished this yeare, the other is in good condition already, but not so good as I desire, for it will coste some mony & time to make the place as I have designed it, & I will not have lesse care both in Scotland & Ireland. As for that which concernes those who have church lands, there will be easy wayes found out to secure them, & put them out of all apprehension. There is all the reason in the worlde to joyne profit with honour, when it may be done honestly, & the king will finde me as forward to do 299 (Holland) a good turne as he can desire, & we shall, I dout not, agree very well in the point, for that country has used us both very scurvily, & I am sure we shall never be satisfied till we have had revenge, & I am very willing to enter into an agreement upon that matter whensoever the king pleases. I will answer for 346 (Arlington) that he will be as forward in that matter as I am, & farther assurance you cannot expect from an honest man in his post, nor ought you to trust him, if he should make any other professions then to be for what his master is for. I say this to you, because I undertooke to answer that part of the letter you writt to him

upon this subject, & I hope this will be full satisfaction as to him in the future, that there may be no doute, since I do answer for him : I had writt thus farr when I receaved yours by Ellwies, by which I perceave the inclination there still is of trusting 112 (Colbert) with the maine business, which I must confess, for many reasons, I am very unwilling to, & if there were no other reason than his understanding, which, to tell you the truth, I have not so great an esteeme for, as to be willing to trust him with that which is of so much concerne. There will be a time when both he & 342 (Montagu) may have a share in part of the matter, but for the great secrett, if it be not kept so till all things be ready to begin, we shall never go through with it, & destroy the whole businesse. I have seen your letter to 341 (Buckingham), & what you write to him is as it ought to be. He shall be brought into all the businesse before he can suspect anything, except that which concernes 263 (Charles II.), which he must not be trusted with. You will do well to writ but seldome to him, for feare something may slip from your penn which may make him jealous that there is something more then what he knows of. I do long to heare from 340 (Arundell) or to see him heere, for till I see the paper you mention which comes from 113 (Lionne) I cannot say more then I have done. And now I shall only add one word of this bearer, Mons^r de la hilière, who I have founde by my acquaintance with him since his being heere, to have both witt & judgement, & a very honest man, & pray lett him know that I am very much his frind, & if att any time you can give him a good word to the King of France, I shall be very glad of it. I will end this with desireing you to beleve that I have nothing so much at my harte as to be able to acknowledge the kindnesse you have for me. If I thought that making many compliments upon that matter would persuade you more of the sincerity of my kindnesse to you, you should not want whole sheets of paper with nothing but that, but I hope you have the iustice to beleve me, more then I can expresse, intierly Yours

C. R.

Charles II. to Madame, June 7th, 1669.

I writt to you yesterday by Mr. de la hilière upon that important point, whether 112 (Colbert de Croissy) ought to be acquainted with our secrett, & the more I thinke of it, the more I am perplexed, reflecting upon his insufficiency, I cannot thinke him fitt for it, & therefore wuld wish some other fitter man in his station, but because the attempting of that might disoblige 137 (Colbert, the French minister), I can by no meanes advise it; upon the whole matter I see no kinde of necessity of telling 112 (Colbert de Croissy) of the secrett now, nor indeede till 270 (Charles II.) is in a better reâinesse to make use of 297 (France) towards the great businesse. Methinkes, it will be enough that 164 (Colbert de Croissy) be made acquainted with 360 (Charles II.'s) security in 100 (the King of France's) frindship, without knowing the reason of it. To conclude, remember how much the secrett in this matter importes, & take care that no new body be acquainted with it, till I see what 340 (Arundell) brings 334 (Charles II.) in answer to his propositions, & till you have my consent that 164 (Colbert de Croissy), or anybody else have there share in that matter. I would faine know (which I cannot do but by 366) (Arundell) how ready 323 (France) is to break with 299 (Holland). That is the game that would, as I conceive, most accomodate the interests both of 270 (England) & 207 (France). As for 324 (Spain), he is sufficiently undoing himselfe to neede any helpe from 271 (France), nay, I am perswaded the meddling with him would unite & make his councells stronger; the sooner you dispatch 340 (Arundell), the more cleerly we shall be able to judge of the whole matter. One caution more, I had like to have forgotten, that when it shall be fitt to acquainte 138 (Colbert de Croissy) with 386 (Charles II.'s) security in 152 (the King's) frindship, he must not say anything of it in 270 (England), & pray lett the ministers in 297 (France) speake lesse confidently of our frindship then I heare they do, for it will infinitely discompose 269 (Parliament) when they meete with 334 (Charles II.) to

believe that 386 (Charles II.) is tied so fast with 271 (France), & make 321 (Parliament) have a thousand jealousies upon it. I have no more to add, but to tell you that my wife after all our hopes, has miscarried againe, without any visible accident. The physicians are divided whether it were a false conception or a good one, & so good night, for 'tis very late. I am intierly yours.

C. R.

Colbert de Croissy to J. B. Colbert, June 17th, 1669.

Mr. de Lionne m'ayant escrit jusqu'à trois lettres pour faire retourner l'Abbé Pregnani je luy ay communiqué et il se prepare à partir dans sept ou huit jours. Je luy ay donné pendant son sejour toutes les marques d'estime qu'il m'a esté possible, et luy ay mesme fait part et de bouche et par escrit de toutes les raisons que jay creû pouvoir porter le Roy d'Angleterre à une bonne Union avec la France, affin qu'il peut d'autant mieux agir de concert avec moy pour venir à bout de ce que le Roy désire de nous : enfin je croy qu'il se louera de moy, comme il en a sujet, et dans cette pensée là je serois bien aise de luy rendre tous les bons offices dont je pourrois estre capable. Mais comme il s'estoit flatté d'une haute fortune, s'il réussissoit dans cette négociation, et qu'il me paroist extrêmement mortifié de s'en retourner sans avoir aucunes bonnes nouvelles à porter, je ne sçais s'il se contentera d'attribuer ce mauvais succès aux veritables obstacles que nous y avons trouvé, et s'il ne me prestera pas des charitez que j'ay reconnu quy luy sont assez ordinaires : auquel cas sy j'en estois averty il seroit facile d'y repondre.

Bibl. Nat. Fonds Français 10665.

Colbert to Lionne, June 17th, 1669.

Je n'ay point osé, Monsieur, après avoir reçu jousqu'à trois lettres de vous pour le retour de Mr. l'abbé Pregnani, differer plus longtemps à luy communiquer. Je luy ay néanmoins dit que s'il jugeoit que ses soins et son adresse peussent réussir auprès du Roy et de ses Ministres il pouvoit vous en

secrirc ses sentiments . . . et attendre vostre réponse, mais comme il m'a dit n'avoir veu aucune apparence, dans le dernier entretien qu'il a eu avec le Roy à une prompte conclusion, je crois qu'il se prepare à partir et vous porter bientost un plan de l'estat où il aura laissé les affaires en ce pays, ne luy ayant rien caché de tout ce quy estoit de ma connaissance, et ne doutant pas qu'il m'en eut encore davantage pénétré de luy-mesme.

Bib. Nat. Fonds Français, 10665.

Charles II. to Madame, June 24th, 1669.

It will be very difficult for me to say anything to you upon the propositions till 340 (Arundell) returne hither, & if he makes many objections, which it may be are not altogether reasonable, you must not wonder at it, for, as he is not a man much versed in affaires of state, so there are many scruples he may have, which will not be so heere, & I am confident, when we have heard the reasons of all sides we shall not differ in the maine, haveing the same interest and inclinations. And for 372 (Arlington) I can say no more for him than I have already done, only that I thinke, being upon the place, & observing everybody as well as I can, I am the best judge of his fidelity to me, & what his inclinations are, and, if I should be deceived in the opinion I have of them, I am sure I should smarte of it most. I shall write to you to-morrow by l'Abbé Prégny, so I shall add no more now, &, in truth, I am just now going to a new play that I heare very much commended, and so I am yours,

C. R.

Colbert to Lionne, July 4th, 1669.

Je crois que quand une personne aussi esclairée que M. l'abbé Pregnani s'en va rendre compte de tout ce qu'il a veu et connu luy mesme il est fort inutile de rien escrire, et je suis assez persuadé qu'il vous fera un plan beaucoup plus beau, et plus agréable des affaires de ce pays-cy que quy que ce soit autre ne pourroit faire, pour n'y devoir rien adjouster du

mien, si non les tesmoignes que je vous dois rendre de tous les soins qu'il s'est donné pour insinuer au Roy et aux principaux Ministres les raisons quy tous doivent faire souhaitter une bonne Union avec la France. Et je ne doute pas mesme qu'une sy bonne semence et sy adroitement respandue n'eut produit tout l'effect que nous pouvons désirer, si, pour parler allegoriquement, la terre eust esté mieux disposée à recevoir le bon pain, et non pas accablée de la production de la Triple Alliance. Mais j'espère que pour peu que nous la laissions à jachère elle sera en estat d'estre cultivée.

Je dois aussy me louer de toutes les honnestetez que mondit sieur l'Abbé m'a fait : surtout à vous, Monsieur, quy m'avez assez donné de marques de l'honneur de vostre bienviellance pour me persuader que vous y voulez bien prendre part, et je souhaitterois de tout mon cœur que les temoignages que je vous en rends peussent augmenter l'estime que vous avez pour ledit sieur Abbé. &c. &c.

Bibl. Nat. Fonds Français, 10665.

Colbert de Croissy to Louis XIV., July 4th, 1669.

Sire,—M^r l'Abbé Pregnani quy s'en va rendre compte à vostre Majesté de ce qu'il fait icy, est si bien informé de l'estat présent des affaires d'Angleterre et de tout ce que l'on en peut attendre, que je crois m'en pouvoir remettre entièrement à ce qu'il aura l'honneur de luy en dire.

.

M^r l'Abbé informera vostre Majesté de tout ce qu'il a sçeu luy-mesme de M^r le Duc d'York des dispositions qu'il y a au reestablisement du crédit ce Prince, de ses bons sentimens, et de toutes les autres choses qu'il a appris par luy-mesme et dont nous nous sommes entretenus.

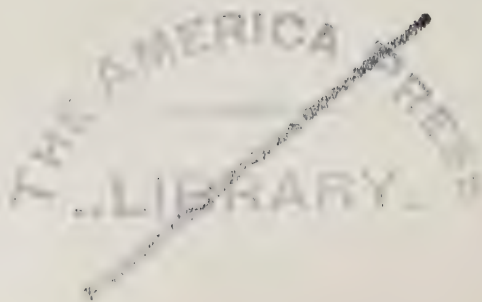
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Lionne to Colbert de Croissy, July 27th, 1669.

L'abbé Pregnani a fait peu de diligence en son voyage et ne m'a rendu vostre despeche du 4^e que plusieurs jours

après que j'avois dejja reçu celles du 8° et 11°. Dans l'entretien que j'ay eu avec l'envoy je n'ay rien trouvé de plus agréable que ce qu'il a dit à tout le monde aussi bien qu'à moi à votre avantage, ne pouvant s'espuiser à parler de votre capacité, de votre application aux affaires, non plus que de vous louer des bonnes traitemens que vous lui avez faits ; mais l'endroit de nos conversations, que je vous avoue, qui m'a le plus touché ont esté les assurances qu'il m'a données que je possède le bien de vostre amitié au point que je l'ay toujours souhaitée et que vous êtes esgalement persuadé de la mienne en quoy vous ne serez jamais trompé.

Affaires Etrangères, Corr. Angl. 96.



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